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Building a working church

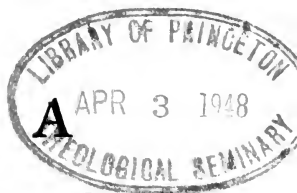
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BUILDING A WORKING CHURCH

BUILDING A WORKING CHURCH



BY

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AUTHOR'S ANNOUNCEMENT.

THIS book is written for all Builders of the Church, whether they be ministers or laymen, whether they build on her material or her spiritual side. Perfect or imperfect, the Church is the visible body of Christ, and therefore is deserving of the highest consideration. The author is convinced that strength and numbers can be added to the Church much more rapidly than they have been in the past, and that it is the supreme duty of Christians now living to make these additions.

There is not a theory in the book. Experience has been gathered from country and city missions, from churches in villages, towns and cities. Only plans that have proved their value over and over again are included. The author feels safe in guaranteeing results when the work suggested is enthusiastically done.

A church has done only half her work when she has maintained herself. As a man keeps himself in health that he may do his life work, so a church should maintain herself that she may do the work committed to her by her Lord. Beginning at Jerusalem the whole world must be evangelized. This

Author's Announcement

is the *work* of the Church; the church that fails here fails utterly.

It is the spirit that quickeneth. On every page of the following book the author has endeavored to say some word that would arouse the spirit of Christian workers. Method and plan are very secondary when the soul is on fire with zeal for God and love for men. When the spirit is active, methods will multiply like bubbles on batter quickened by new leaven.

Work is the need of the Church to-day, just plain, hard, continuous red-blood *work*. We know enough, but we do not work enough. Never, in all the history of the race, were the people so eager to know the Truth, never were they so responsive to a little genuine interest, a little unselfish service.

It is the contention of the author that any worthy church that wishes to grow large and strong; that wishes to take the place our common Master intended, may do so. This book is an attempt to tell you how.

S. C. B.

Toledo, Ohio.

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I.

THE WORLD'S NEED, THE CHURCH'S OPPORTUNITY.

THE outstanding need of the world in the twentieth century, the need whose cry goes up like the wail of a forsaken infant in the night, is for thousands of pastors and churches of all denominations who, forgetting their differences and forsaking ease, will go forward with the zeal of the spirit-filled Apostles and win the careless, the indifferent and the openly sinful men and women of our day to an atoning Saviour and a life of righteousness. The fact that a few pastors and churches in widely separated communities are doing this thing reveals the fact that it might be done in all communities if the same consecration and activity were present. It ought to be seen everywhere. It ought to be a commonplace, instead of the striking exception it is to-day.

A swift review of denominational statistics reveals the lamentable fact that there were scores of churches in America, having pastors and from one to three hundred members, that did not win one soul from sin to righteousness in the last twelve long months; and this not in shrinking populations, but

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in thriving cities and villages where there are twice as many non-Christians as Christians. In view of the quick and ready response of the human heart to the gripping power of the Gospel persuasively told, how can such pastors and churches go on laying the blame on the sinfulness of the world and praying long, wordy, lifeless prayers that God will build up His Kingdom and drive out Satan with its power?

How is He going to build up His Kingdom until the dying, ash-coated embers in the hearts of millions of Christians are stirred into a warming, life-giving flame? Until those now claiming to be His shall arouse themselves from lethargy, stop all quarreling and feud-fanning, all seeking of personal glory and advancement, all exploiting of the Church for personal gain, either financial or social, and, getting a vision of a redeemed world by creeping close to His great, throbbing, longing heart, and looking out through His loving eyes, go forth from thence and win, one by one, the boys and girls, the youths and the maidens, the men and the women of maturity, who *ought* to be His and who *will* be His, as soon as a little life-giving, Christian leaven touches them?

It will be entirely apart from the problem, and will only delay its solution, for some very dignified and self-righteous Christians to sit back on reading this and act offended and declare in icy tones that they are not guilty of the charges named. Thank

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God if you, personally, are not, but the fact remains that largely because of these very sins, thousands of churches are at a standstill and thousands more are barely maintaining themselves, or are going forward at a snail's pace. The moment the whole body of Christians begins to live right and work faithfully, that moment will our churches be overcrowded with new members, and our treasuries overflowing with willing offerings.

Two Common and Unpardonable Mistakes.

Upon somewhat extended inquiry over a wide territory, it is revealed that many churches owe their continued barrenness to two quite unpardonable mistakes: The first of these, found even more commonly than the second, especially in the smaller communities, is that a church, whatever its size, is doing very well if, at the end of each succeeding year, it shows no appreciable loss in members and can close the period with all bills paid.

How is the world to be saved if all our churches possess only such negative virtues? Self-maintenance is not the *work* of the Church. A man keeps himself in health that he may serve the world and win a competence; he does not consider himself a success if, as the years go by, he simply keeps himself alive. The church that just maintains itself is a failure as a part of the world-saving force of Jesus. He must have organizations that keep them-

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selves alive, healthy and vigorous, that they may bear fruit to His glory and the saving of men.

The second unpardonable mistake of many very good people is to feel that a church has done about all it can when it has won to a bloodless sort of Christianity from one-fourth to one-third of the population of its community. Some years ago a young and enthusiastic pastor began his work in a small church located in the heart of a thriving commercial city of some fourteen thousand inhabitants. He yearned to win its unsaved men and women to his Master, and began to lay his plan of campaign before his leading officer. The venerable man listened with respectful indifference to the young enthusiast's recital, and when something was expected from him, said languidly, "My young brother, I do not want to discourage you, but when you begin to work you will soon find, as other pastors have, that this pond is pretty well fished out."

The young man decided he would see for himself. He superintended a religious canvass of the city, which revealed that of the fourteen thousand inhabitants less than four thousand were professing Christians, and over four hundred of the remainder gave as their preference the small church of which he was pastor. It is a good example of the way most other ponds are fished out. A small, weak church in a populous, unsaved community presents the pathetic picture of a man starving in the midst

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of plenty because he will not go and gather the food.

Another thing which occasionally reveals this error is for a real, live, spirit-filled evangelist to visit the community. All the work has been done, mind you, all the fruit gathered! As the man of God declares his message in words that pierce the thick coats of indifference, and the hard crusts of sin, and revived, warm-hearted Christians begin to do personal work, sinning men and women, whom the churches have long classed as unsavable, come out from their old lives by hundreds and thousands, and the churches waken up to say: "We have had another Pentecost." Well, yes, but the same forces would have produced the same transformations any time in the past fifty years.

When this thing can be done and is not done, where is the responsibility to rest? Not upon the sinful world. No good work can be expected from it; but surely upon those men and women who, blessed with a knowledge of the saving power of the Gospel, have done little or nothing to bring the unsaved in their communities to a confession of the Saviour that will yield them spiritual birth and all the joy and strength of Christian righteousness.

A Consideration of the Need.

One does not consider the sinful, wretched state of society because it is a pleasant thing to do. It

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is much finer to consider the birds and the flowers, the sunlight and the green fields, but just as the victim of a loathsome ulcer, refusing to acknowledge its presence and seek a cure, soon dies from its ravages, so the generation that shuts its eyes to the destructive elements at work in its members and makes no effort to eliminate them, must pay the awful price of its sin.

The brave man is not he, who, hiding his head like the ostrich, refuses to see, but is one who looks carefully and with wise consideration, and if he sees hurtful elements at work in his own life or in the life of his city or nation, uses the knife with the firm decision of the fearless surgeon, letting poisoned blood if necessary, but saving the better part of him or his people to a stronger, more honorable life.

When a state of society exists which breaks up one home in every twelve by a scandal in the divorce court; when countless more are ruined by murder or other tragedy, growing out of infidelity on the part of either wife or husband, when indecency in word or action is becoming more than commonplace; and the selling of virtue, or the ruining of it, is becoming more and more a matter of coarse jest, it would seem to be fully time for the Church of the Sinless One to gird herself and do valiant battle. When the gambling instinct is fostered and encouraged by many well-meaning merchants, and by some

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great and powerful religious organizations; when drinking, card-playing and attendance upon low, passion-arousing theatres are declared to be entirely harmless pleasures in which the young and inexperienced have every right to engage; when city and national governments are willing to license the most damning, life-blighting institution the world has ever seen, for the return of a few blood-stained dollars; it would seem there were cause enough to arouse to action any man or woman with a spark of chivalry, or love of purity, to say nothing at all of the Church made up of men and women who claim to be making an honest effort to walk in the footsteps of Him who hated sin with His whole being and did everything in His power to drive it from the world.

The Blight and the Blister of Sin.

How childlike and unworthy it is for the Church to refuse to see the awful need for her aggressive good offices in modern society! The growingly common saying that things are not so bad as reformers are wont to paint them is irrefutably answered by such an incident as occurred only a few days ago in a western city, an occurrence that is matched in some city of our nation as often as once in every twenty-four hours. A young couple who believed in individual license married; each drank a little, just a little, as is allowed by the best society! In due

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time children came, then trouble, and the glass of each grew larger. More trouble. The husband wandered away from home; the wife sought other lovers; the husband returned and sought a reconciliation, which was declined; enraged, he filled himself with liquor, his revolver with cartridges; sought his wife, shot her dead; tried to kill her companion, and, failing in this, turned the weapon on himself, ending his own wretched life. Mere trifles, of course, not to be noticed, these practices called moderate drinking, low theatre-going, loose social customs; but the inevitable fruitage, however unwillingly gathered, forces the confession that the ancient teacher was right when he said: "Whatsoever a man soweth *that* shall he also reap," and, "The wages of sin is death."

A young girl of good parentage, rebelling against the restraints of Christian parents and the teaching of the Church, accepted the company of a flashy young man, of low morals, and no character. The pace they went was fierce, and for a few weeks fascinating, and then the awful truth forced itself upon them that their sin would soon make her a mother. At this tragic stage the fine young man disappeared, and the fair girl, unwilling to bear the blight of coming shame, ended her life with strychnine.

A splendid young man, of fine physical and mental inheritance, entered a great university to complete

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his education. Light-hearted, he made friends among a fast set of young fellows who supplemented the somewhat slow festivities of the university town with an occasional visit to a nearby city where, unobserved, they could go to any lengths desired. Inside of sixty days he was going with them. Visiting a physician at the end of his first year for treatment of a supposed trifling ailment, it was revealed that in his revels he had contracted disease that could never be cured; that would more and more weaken his powers and ruin his life; that precluded a happy home and family. This young man took the pistol route to oblivion.

Barren Souls Equally Pathetic.

But among the vast company of wholly respectable, honest, honorable citizens of America who have never confessed the Saviour to the point of spiritual birth, there is a soul-barrenness that wrings the heart of one who knows what they might be. Young mechanics, merchants and professional men and their wives, by the hundred thousand, who see no higher than the counter or a bread-winning success; whose eyes have never opened upon visions of a world redeemed, in part, by their activity; who have not yet learned that "Man cannot live by bread alone," who have never learned the beauty, the power, the sustaining strength of personal contact with the One Man who fully overcame the world.

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A visit was made not long ago to the home of a young couple of the upper middle class. The husband, a rising young merchant of limited education, the wife a high school graduate from a middle western village. The young wife held her first baby in her arms, treasuring it as only such a mother can. "No, they never attended church. The husband was so tired when Saturday night came, and Sunday they slept late and the rest of the day enjoyed the baby. Read books? Well, she should say not! Neither of them had time for such things. About all they ever did do for amusement was to spend one evening a week at vaudeville or a moving picture show. No, they really did not feel a need for the Church or any religious services, and they had no time to help anybody else; they preferred to remain just as they were!"

Shall the Church Try Harder?

This then is the situation in the average American town and city: from one-fourth to one-third of the people Christian; amongst the remainder sin is rampant or indifference blighting. Can pastors and churches remain quiet and inactive when this condition exists? Can they feel that "doing pretty well" will satisfy the Master who commissioned us to win the whole world? "The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits," says the Prophet Daniel. (Dan. xi: 32.) An exploit is a

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rare or unusual service; something out of the ordinary, something better than "doing pretty well." Have we not reached the time when *exploits* are in order? When unusual successes in soul-winning should not create so much comment? When for a church in a populous, unsaved community to do less than double its membership every two or three years should be looked upon as something of a disgrace?

Shall the Church Broaden Her Scope?

The Church is allowing other institutions to do much of the work it is her business to do. Confessing that her first work must ever be spiritual, let us not forget that in His gripping parable Christ pictured the Great Judge casting away into outer darkness those who had not visited the sick, ministered to the needy, extended the cup of cold water in His name. Let the Church speak no word against social organizations that are ministering to human need, to which she has been indifferent. She should be the leader in relief, in reform, in fostering every worthy, uplifting enterprise. Just as the work of the physician and the hospital in foreign mission fields opens thousands of hearts to the Gospel, so the Church at home will find that she will twine spiritual arms around lost souls when she ministers to the betterment of the bodies those souls inhabit.

The Glory of a World Redeemed.

If the need of the work does not *prod* us to action,

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perhaps a picture of the world redeemed and purified will *draw* us to it. Fancy picking up a newspaper containing no hint of assault, or murder, or other human wrong! No police court news, for such courts have died for want of business; no accounts of prize fights, for men have risen above the beasts and taken the place in God's universe He planned for them; no awful railroad wrecks caused directly or indirectly by the greed and heartlessness of money kings; no accounts of broken homes or marital infidelity, for men and women are living pure as their newly chosen Master; no injustice on the part of employer, no destruction of property on the part of the employed; churches and schools overcrowded, and no man asking his brother, "Knowest thou the Lord?" for all men know Him, from the least even to the greatest!

O, yes, *it is possible*, and what is more, *it is coming*, and, many of us believe, not so very far away. God does not begin a good work to soon abandon it. Just as sure as He began winning this willful, disobedient, sinning race back to Himself, He is going to keep up the work till His family is complete. Will you be indifferent and compel others to drag along your dead weight? Or will you plunge into the conflict like a war-for-liberty hero, and never sheath your sword so long as the world holds a wrong or an unsaved soul? When we have a million such soldiers the conflict will soon end in victory.

WINNING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

II.

FORCES IN THE CONFLICT.

THE warfare in which the Christian Church is engaged differs from all other in this, that while the weapons and animating spirit of her adversaries must be destroyed, the adversaries themselves must not only be spared, but they must be benefited and then won as friends, and finally as soldiers in the very cause they once withstood.

How different this is from ordinary warfare, even from the warfare of the ancient Jewish Theocracy, may be reckoned from the command given to Saul concerning the Amelekites (I Samuel xv: 3): "Now go and smite Amelek and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Witness also the many times the enemies of Jerusalem, not content with killing or taking captive all the inhabitants, went so far in their relentless wrath as to destroy every structure in the conquered city, plow its area as a field and sow it with salt to signify its utter annihilation. To vanquish an opposing army and yet win its members as friends and supporters of the once opposed cause,

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requires a magnanimity and tact characteristic of the Saviour himself. It is by no means universal in the Church, and just as an army preparing for sanguinary warfare must spend weeks, and, if possible, months in preparation, so the individual members of the Church might well take time to cultivate the graces of their Master without which they will be poor soldiers indeed.

These enemies are not to be wounded; on the contrary, the wounds they have already received while living in sin are to be mollified with the oil and wine of God's consolation. If the Christian soldier ruthlessly tears open the old wounds or heartlessly inflicts new ones, how can he expect to win the enemies of the Lord to the Christ-like life that is the essence of true Christianity? A few months ago a dozen of the inmates of the Girls' School of Correction, a State Institution at Mitchellville, Iowa, rebelled against the authorities in charge, incited the other girls to riot, and caused such disturbance that they were removed to the Polk County jail in Des Moines. Wide investigation was instigated to discover what had led this group of girls to so rebel. It was proved that they had been well housed, well clothed, and well fed. When efforts to discover the cause seemed about to fail one state officer resigned from the Board of Control, and with his resignation published a long statement in which he revealed that certain helpers at the institution were in the habit

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of throwing into the faces of the girls their old mistakes and failures, the misdemeanors that had sent them to the House of Correction, sins they had long since repented of and wished to forget. It was like throwing powder into a flame. It exploded the old nature, making them worse than before.

The incident holds a lesson for the Church. We will not succeed by continually pointing to the past sins of those we wish to win, but by holding up ideals for the future and helping them blot out and forget the past, by showing them by example and by precept the thing they may become, the life they may live, with the help of God. We are to be wiser than the wisest serpent; more harmless than the most harmless dove, and so determined to win and not wound that our Master will delight in us as we gather in His lost ones, till not a single prodigal remains away from the Father's house.

Considering the Opposition.

Our Master taught that when about to launch an enterprise, the wise man always sat down first and counted the cost. If about to build a house, did he have money enough to finish it? If to begin a war, could he with one thousand soldiers successfully contend with an adversary who had ten thousand? In capturing the world for Christ, or the nation, or our own community, for conditions are much the same wherever man is found, what is the

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strength of the enemy? What the possibilities of victory?

Looking the whole field over; considering city, village and rural community, one reaches the conclusion that in America the opposition outnumbers fully two to one the forces of the Church, and that they may be divided into three quite well defined groups. First, the openly bad. This group is surprisingly small by comparison. Not many men and women in any community are so far down in the scale of human conduct as to openly break the laws of God and man. Most of them are in the toils of the law much of the time. A hard class to reach; harder to influence for good, though not so much so as is generally supposed. Mrs. Maud Ballington Booth, and other workers in the Salvation Army, have won thousands of this class during the period of their incarceration for crime, and thousands more have been won by plain spoken evangelists and mission workers who have forced them to think of sacred things.

Institutions That are Worse Than Men.

Perhaps a more hurtful element in the opposition than the lives of these openly sinful men and women are the institutions they create and foster; the saloon, the gambling hell, the low, passion-breeding theatre. Hurtful to all men, they are rank poison to adolescent youth. Of course they could be

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quickly exterminated if the forces of the Church would act unitedly against them, but since they bring a little revenue to owners of ramshackle buildings, pay high taxes, even though those taxes are more than eaten up by the extra court and police costs the institutions bring upon the State, they are supported by many good people whose attitude toward them is incomprehensible from the standpoint of the Christ. *He made no compromise with sin.* He would scorn the blood-money such institutions produce. The human mind cannot conceive of this sinless One accepting any kind of return from an institution that did its utmost to weaken and rob other men, that taught young manhood that it is all right to beat your fellowmen out of their hard-earned dollars if you are sharp enough to do it and escape the penitentiary, or that eternally flaunted in the faces of growing boys and girls, lewd theatre posters and pictures of prize fights that reveal humanity at its lowest depths. From these tangible things there issues an intangible influence it is hard indeed to overcome. Just as you must bury the carcass of a dead beast to escape the decaying odors, so these institutions must be killed and buried out of sight before the hurtful influence arising from them can be stopped.

The second group is slightly larger. It is composed of men and women who in the main live moral and honorable lives, but who, through erroneous

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teaching or misunderstanding, look upon modern Christianity with distrust, or as a force to be opposed. Among them will be found many who will hail Christ, but hiss the Church; who declare faith in Him, but do not follow Him and who refuse to fellowship with those making an heroic effort to do so, on the assertion that the effort is not honest.

The third group comprises the vast majority of those not yet in the Kingdom. It is composed chiefly of men and women who know little, oftentimes nothing, about Christianity, and who will not take the trouble to inquire; those who give most of their time and strength to making a living and seeking personal pleasure and who do not give Christianity much thought. As nearly as possible they are neither for it nor against it. They have never been forced to think the subject through and reach a conclusion. Most of them, when approached by a wise worker, will say: "Yes, I know I ought to be a Christian, it is the right thing to do, and sometime I intend to take the step." And here is the vital element in it all: *Most of these people are won by the first tactful, persistent effort to win them that is put forth*, a thing which multiplies the responsibility of the Church and condemns every one of us for past inactivity.

The Accessibility of Our Foe.

Strange as the idea may seem at first, the Church

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is to be congratulated on the fact that the forces against which she must contend are so readily accessible. The traveler through Galilee is shown great caves in the face of a cliff where a band of robbers entrenched themselves when the government was trying to rid the country of them. So inaccessible were the caves, the only avenue of approach being open to the death missiles of the bandits, that for months they remained unmolested. At last, however, law and order prevailed. Great cages full of fighting men were let down the face of the cliff from above. With superior weapons and courage they soon overpowered the outlaws and destroyed them.

No such ingenuity is demanded from the Church. Those we wish to capture are all around us. Some of them beloved children in our homes; some of them our closest friends, to whom for some strange reason we have been afraid to speak; some of them are our business associates with whom we rub elbows every day; some our closest neighbors with whom we talk freely on every other subject under heaven. We may need ingenuity of approach, but the thing we need most is *courage*. Courage to do the thing nine-tenths of our friends would gladly welcome and quickly respond to! When the courage of the Church is "screwed up to the sticking point" the race will be quickly won to Jesus.

Winning the Local Community

The Forces of the Church Considered.

Many very good Christians are so occupied worrying about the power of the opposition that they never think of the power, or the lack of it, of the attacking force. It is entirely possible, if we would strengthen the weak places in our own forces, the power of the opposition would be insignificant by comparison. The attacking force falls also into three groups which it will be our duty to consider.

First stands the small company of valiant ones; spirit-filled, aggressive, alert; on the spring like an athlete on his marks. They are the workers of the hive, never still, never too tired nor too busy to say a word for Christ when an opportunity opens. They are the steady fruit-gatherers of the Kingdom. Without them the harvest would be small indeed. Without them the most faithful pastor would lose heart. Oh! but they are few! *Shamefully few*, when they should be commensurate with the membership of the Church. In most communities they can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Next to them stands the much larger company who work to win souls to Christ when they themselves are temporarily stimulated by special services, or some outstanding spiritual experience. When so aroused they do good work, oftentimes remarkably good work. What they do when so aroused shows what they should do all the time. It is difficult to

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understand how they quiet their conscience during the idle times.

Here again the third class is the large one; hundreds of thousands more here than in both the other classes put together; the vast company of professing Christians who never do a stroke of face-to-face work for Him. Many are not yet sufficiently aroused to the need of it; many say they can't; while a very large company confess, when pressed to the point, that the lives they are living are not sufficiently Christ-like to warrant them in trying to move others to begin it. Consider an army whose generals were zealous enough, whose under officers were good fighters when stimulated, but whose rank and file were indifferent or inactive; not worthy to fight for the cause they were depending on to save them! It would be a very fair picture of the modern Church, so far as proportion of workers to non-workers is concerned. How many victories would you expect such an army to win?

To capture any community for Christ it will be necessary that the *whole* Christian force be stimulated to the point of action and kept stimulated until all are won. We have force enough to do the work; the lives to be won are entirely accessible; experience proves that they are readily responsive to the warm heart-call of Christian love. Have we the love, and will we sound the call? Blame not the unsaved when so much fault rests with ourselves.

Winning the Local Community

When the Church gets right, the community will be saved.

The Weapons of Christian Warfare.

While the lives of the men and women in the forces the Church must meet are to be saved and strengthened, the institutions they have created and fostered must be utterly exterminated. There is absolutely no place for them in a redeemed society. The main weapon with which the Church must accomplish this destruction is the ballot. We are a law-abiding people in a democracy where the majority rules. Put that ballot into the hands of all normal, enlightened citizens, both men and women, and let them say by honestly counted vote whether these hurtful institutions shall go or stay. No man or woman who votes to keep them *should longer march under the banner of Christ*. Let them go out and openly join the forces of sin they are supporting, and not hide, like hypocritical murderers, under the folds of the Church while secretly they are stabbing her to death.

How little and how slowly the Church realizes the power that is in her hands! With her own vote solid and with the many that would vote with her among non-Christians who desire to see purity and righteousness prevail, she would have a majority, in any normal community, against every flagrant evil that exists. Fancy any great general with

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power enough in his hands to destroy an enemy's fortifications, weakly submitting to their existence and even contributing no little amount to their strength! Truly the children of the world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.

Two other powerful weapons remain with which the Church must accomplish her warfare, and the first of these is enlightenment. The sinfulness of the world arises largely from the ignorance among the masses that better things are possible. The cry which escaped the lips of a youth when asked by an honest physician why he had sinned incurably against nature is typical: "Oh, my God! I did not know." Millions of our fellow citizens, born under the curse of sin, have never seen the Light. To them the Sun of Righteousness does not shine. Many, knowing that better things do exist, have no knowledge as to how they may pass from their present position to a higher one. To them the gulf seems fixed. It is a closed door having no knob on their side.

This magnificent weapon called enlightenment it is the privilege of the Church to use. In conjunction with one other to be mentioned in a moment, it will prove highly effectual in solving the difficulty. Men must know Christ to love Him, must know by observation the glories of the Christ-life before they will be moved to strive after it. To this end the Church must enthusiastically support every educa-

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tional force that is Christian in its trend, and must establish more. The Sabbath School must be enlarged in its scope and purpose, and enriched by more of the lives of the strongest, most Spirit-filled men and women of the Church. It must become more and more recruiting station and training ground. The Church must go with her knowledge of the things of God to the people who will not attend her formal services. There must be more Hull House and Chicago Commons settlements; with consecrated lives and uplifting pictures and stimulating music and clean Christian homes and, above all, the Gospel Story persuasively told, we must, if necessary for a time, force a knowledge of Christ and better ways of living upon those who do not know them. No darkness can stand against that light. It conquers all opposition and, while doing so, fills the lives it is conquering with a new and vital joy. Let the Church begin anew to shed this Light. Wisely used, it is the cure-all for ignorance-blighted, sin-cursed lives.

One should hasten to say, however, that it must never be used alone. The bow that must ever shoot this penetrating arrow is the bow of Love. Sent forth by any other force it may produce a festering wound, but when love is the impelling and attending force its entrance can bring only betterment to a life. Ancient tyrants, who had no love for their subjects, but wished to hold them as

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slaves, denied them learning, for they said, "When these people know that anything else is possible, they will rebel." But wiser, less selfish monarchies said, "Let the people be taught, for when they know our laws are enacted for their good, they will support us all the more." When the Church is prompted by love, when no selfish motive or hope of return is apparent in her reaching after the unsaved, they will come by thousands where they now come by tens, and the Father's house will be filled. "Go out quickly and compel them to come in." But men can be forced only by love. Police power irritates them and makes them rebellious. Love conquers the will and makes them want to come.

These weapons then the Church may freely use, the ballot, enlightenment, love. The greatest of these is the last. It must be the dynamo that drives all else or the Great Purpose will never be accomplished. Let the prayer of the Church be from this day forth: "Oh, Master, teach us how to love,—*all men*,—for Thy sake, Amen."

III.

THE PASTOR'S PART.

THE capturing of any community for Christ, whether its population be large or small, demands that a tremendous amount of hard work be done. Men have never forced their way into the Kingdom and particularly they are not doing it in the complex and absorbing life of the twentieth century. Scores of forces are pulling on every life and, other things being equal, the one that pulls the hardest and most persistently gets it. How much genuine *pull* on men has your life, your church? Will the centripetal overcome the centrifugal? In the *go* and *come* of modern social movements in your vicinity, will the balance most often be in favor of the Church?

Pastors must never lose sight of the fact that their *pull-work* must be done so skilfully as to be well-nigh imperceptible; certainly it must be free from the slightest objectionable quality. Our Master won men chiefly by three elements of power: Sheer force of manhood, keen and fresh intellectuality, and heart power. He did not say, "You *must* come after me or be eternally damned," but

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rather, "If any man *wills* to come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." To be permanent and effectual the coming must be a *free-will act*. When a rubber band is stretched beyond its normal size, it snaps back the moment the compulsion is released.

Equal Efforts; Different Results.

In a certain steel mill in the middle states two good men were wont to work. One was the local minister, whose zeal far outmeasured his tact. He tried to force the employees to be churchmen. At the noon hour, from nail keg or idle bench, he would exhort the workmen in strident tones. "They *must* change their manner of life. They *must* attend his church services. Death and hell were the only portion of those who would not." The men smoked quietly and listened with respect, but they were unmoved. The word had filtered among their number that the minister was none too kind to his own family, that he did not pay his debts, the feeling grew in each heart that his efforts in their behalf were not wholly unselfish. No trout will rise to a fly if he sees a hook! So when it was announced that he would preach in the public park on Sunday afternoon the men sauntered away to the woods.

The other man of whom I speak was a workman in the mill. He was not ordained to the ministry,

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but often preached. He made no pretenses to oratory, but his simple utterances gripped the heart. He had no word of rebuke for the men, but ever held before them high ideals. As the boys came away from simple suppers in his humble home they told their friends of his gentleness to his children, and the perfection of his unostentatious discipline. The word went round that here was a *man*. After a number had found the Saviour during quiet talks in his bare den, the word went round that here was a *Christian*, and when the committee in charge invited the humble workman to speak at the park service one Sabbath afternoon, the employees of the mill were there by hundreds, while more fruit was gathered after that service than after any other during the summer series. The feeling is growing among those who watch such things closely that ministers must spend more time cultivating the *graces* of the Master. We cannot drive men; we must *win* them. By strength of character, by fresh outlook and utterance, by sympathy and unselfish service. Men so won stay won and become winners.

Hard Work Wins Here as Elsewhere.

It is clear that the failure of many churches to gather new members is due to the fact that the work is not *pushed*. A thousand trifling obstructions arise to keep well-meaning men and women, who as yet lack the zeal of God's house, from tak-

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ing the final step. If the matter is not pressed they will not come. It is common for many very worthy Church officers to stiffen their back just here and say, "Well, if there is not enough to these people to make them overcome the obstructions and come any way, let them stay out. They will not be much help to the Church if they come!"

Two grievous faults here. We are not trying to win men primarily for the help they will be to the Church, but to save their souls; the help they render the Church is incidental; and then, wide experience has proven beyond question that many who come into the Church haltingly and reluctantly often become the best workers the Church has when they become permeated with her rich spirit.

The question of moving a church building to more attractive and serviceable quarters was once under discussion by the board of a city home mission church. One dour elder strenuously objected. He conceded the building was not well located, *but it could be found* and "if people want to go to church, let them show it by going where the building is." The tactful missionary took the elder on his own ground: "That is exactly the point. The people do not want to go to church, and it is the business of the present membership to make the building and the service so attractive they will want to go." The elder soon saw his error and was the first contributor to the moving fund.

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Nothing but the most aggressive, persistent work will bring the people in anything like large numbers, and it is the business of the pastor to see that such work is done.

Routine as a Resource.

Just as important also is the call for tactful and systematic endeavor. It is the "long pull, the strong pull, and the persistent pull" that ultimately wins. To give an invitation and not follow it up; to allow one rebuff to silence you; to allow a slight difficulty to remain in the way of one you wish to win, is to commit sins of omission of which the churches should not be guilty.

All too often the spirit of a Christian worker burns low; physical weariness is followed by the deadening thought of "what's the use? People prefer to stay where they are, and the most strenuous efforts seem futile." In such an hour but one thing will save a man, and that is a definite system which sends him to his task whether he feels like going or not. Phillips Brooks, speaking before the divinity students at Yale, some years ago, said: "Routine is a terrible master, but she is a servant whom we can hardly do without. . . . A strong, wooden structure running through your work, a set of well-framed and well-jointed habits about times and ways of work, writing, studying, intercourse with people, the administration of charity and education, and

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the proportion between the different parts of clerical labor, is again and again the bridge over which the minister walks when the solid ground of higher motive fails him for a time. Routine as a law is deadly. Routine as a resource in the temporary exhaustion of impulse and suggestions is often our salvation."

The Loud Call for Leadership.

All of this but adds to the volume of the loud call for an alert, consecrated, aggressive leadership from our thousands of worthy pastors. The pastor is the key to this complex lock. Never in the world's history was the call so loud and persistent; never was the pastor's opportunity so great. Newspaper assertions that the ministry is decadent are but the effusions of uninformed minds. The man who takes his ministry seriously, who looks upon it as a magnificent opportunity to serve God and his fellowmen, who discovers how fruitful an intelligent leadership is, will grapple it to his heart with hoops of steel.

Let us at once deny the all too prevalent idea that a minister should do all, or practically all, of the work of the church. Referring to the sudden death from overwork of one of the leading New York pastors, a minister of that city said recently: "New York is becoming a grave-yard for preachers. Within two years five of the pastors of her leading churches have died under fifty years of age. For

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their deaths the people are largely responsible. They say in substance if not in words: 'We are paying your salary and providing sufficient funds; now go on and do the work'; and the willing pastors, shouldering the load, soon fall under its awful weight."

Christian people must remember that ministers are flesh and blood like themselves, that they grow weary from prolonged overwork, and mental strain; that they can never lock up the shop and leave it to take care of itself while they recuperate, but whenever they are on the field they are on duty, whether it be night or day.

In the Master's telling figure the pastor is to lead the flock and feed it. That congregation wins immeasurably that allows its pastor to be its leader, that stimulates and encourages him to formulate working plans, and then, with unlimited enthusiasm and consecration, throws itself into working out those plans and making them effectual.

Strength Against Heart-Break.

It is a lamentable necessity in the twentieth century that pastors shall steel themselves against heart-break. So many good people lack the thoughtfulness in utterance and magnanimity in action that will save their pastors aching wounds and sleepless nights. To do successful work in the Christian ministry men must have sensitive natures, and members might well take more care to turn in the raw edges

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of their remarks. The rasp of a file may be a good thing to sharpen a hoe, but a cutting remark never yet made a minister a better servant. "Why did the former minister leave this field?" I once asked a man who knew concerning a prominent Colorado parish. "He left," said my friend, "because certain officers of the church, by unwarranted criticism of his methods, broke his heart."

It has happened a thousand times and it looks as though it would happen a thousand times more before people come to their senses. When your minister shows a little spirit and employs effectual and fruit-getting methods, even though they may differ slightly from past custom, in heaven's name, don't stop him; let the good man go on, and help him in his work. To call him to do your work and then stop him when he starts is worse than the act of a child who planted a shrub one day and pulled it up by the roots the next to see if it was growing. The Master said nothing about method, but He said much in favor of branches that bear fruit and much against those that do not. If effectual methods employed by your pastor are not contrary to the scriptures, members have no right to criticise them, to say nothing of the unwisdom of deadening a minister's enthusiasm. The scriptures abundantly support the effectual man who said fearlessly, "I am become all things to all men that I may by all means save some."

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What the Minister Can Do.

That the above is not said to excuse the minister for weaknesses or mistake, or to shield him from just corrections will be abundantly evident from what follows. I believe the minister should be one of the hardest workers in his community. I have no apology for the minister who idles away precious time under any figment of excuse whatsoever. A minister is entitled to one day's rest in seven and a reasonable time for sleep, but no more, and the man who takes more, unless by special arrangement, wrongs the congregation that supports him. Some very good men need to remember that, "Not only is he idle who does nothing, but he is also idle who might be better employed"; that a man may be idle dawdling over a book which there is no real reason for reading just as surely as though he sat and twirled his thumbs; that *idleness begins when a man yields less than his maximum possible production.*

The man who would build up his church and make it a creating force must throw himself into his work with his whole heart; must give up once and forever the thought of ease and what was once called "gentlemanly leisure."

"We are not here to play, to dream, to drift,
We have hard work to do and loads to lift."

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Gentlemen, if we want our people to give themselves to us, we must give ourselves to them. There must be no holding back for selfish reasons, no dividing of interest; no feeling that a small, comfortable effort will suffice; no refusal to keep on, though those with whom we work are critical or even worse than ineffectual. "The world wants results; not good and sufficient reasons why results are not forthcoming." Well, so does the Master. *We must not disappoint Him.*

Put the Sermon First.

And first of all the effectual pastor must make himself a strong, virile, heart-reaching preacher of the word of God. "It has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." The sermon must not be neglected; its preparation given only the rag-tags of a week of turmoil. How close to the facts Dr. Stevenson was when, during the recent McCormick Seminary celebration, he said: "Many a minister, who has allowed the week to be filled with social and administrative duties, leaving scant time for the preparation of the sermon, presents on Sunday morning a thing of shreds and patches, concerning which he ought to say, as Falstaff did when introducing his rustic bride, "A poor thing, gentlemen, but mine own!"

The effectual minister will ever be a prophet; the man who declares to the world; "Thus sayeth the

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Lord.” Like Knox, he must never fear the face of man, and like Savonarola, he must declare to the people that the sword of destruction ever hangs above the sinful. According to divine instruction, he must reprove when the conduct of his people is questionable; he must rebuke when it is scandalous, and he must exhort with all long suffering and patience. He must in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves in the hope that God will grant them time to correct their errors and be saved.

The preacher must be the mouthpiece of God; the pulpit the throne from which the King speaks. When either fails, the people perish. Nothing can take the place of the true prophet’s voice. If he forsakes utterance and gives himself to ritual service or even sacrifice, he loses his power and sinks to a mere priest, becoming nothing but a cog in the wheel of ecclesiastical procedure. Therefore, let the minister fail elsewhere if he must, but let him not fail to declare unto his people the whole counsel of God with fearless voice and all the eloquence he can acquire. To do less is to lose the greatest opportunity for service and influence God ever placed in men’s hands. It is to be weak at the one point wherein we *must* be strong. To do less is to fail of God’s ideal for us!

Pastor Must Help Preacher.

Following close on the work of the preacher is the

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work of the pastor, the shepherd of the flock. How many good men are to-day drawing back from this task and saying: "If I am to give the time necessary to make strong sermons, I cannot find time to also do pastoral work." Yes, gentlemen, *we can and we must*. No man can do brain work all the time. I know many fine fellows who, under the delusion that they are getting needed knowledge, read themselves into insensibility and when they begin to write, their production has no *spring*, no gripping power. If there were no other reason, a man must do systematic and extended pastoral work to be able to declare the word of God with heart-binding power. Let it be said again, "It is the man behind the message" that sends it to the human heart.

A preacher must know the heartaches and throbs of humanity by meeting his people in the intimate intercourse of their own homes before he can speak a language they understand. Few men ever know the value of personal contact as did the lamented Maltbie Babcock. In conversation, by letter, by telephone or message, he kept in personal touch with his people. They loved him like a father and hung upon his words as a maiden upon the words of her betrothed.

Furthermore, pastoral work is absolutely necessary if a man desires to win new members in any large numbers. It is while in the homes of his people he learns of members of those families still unsaved or of new residents who may be reached. Seventy-five

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per cent. of the members won by a pastor who is building up his congregation at the rate of two hundred a year are discovered while making pastoral calls. Two or three afternoons a week will work marvels, and every man needs that much time out of his study to keep him from going to seed or becoming a mere spinner of impractical theories.

If the Church of which he is pastor publishes a weekly calendar, let the minister print, the Sunday before, the names of the families on whom he will call during two or three afternoons of the week following. If no calendar is printed, the names may be announced from the pulpit. Some such paragraph as this may precede the names: "The Pastor will call this week at the following homes. If not convenient to receive his call at the time indicated, please notify him as early as possible. While but one name is given, let it be understood that the call is upon all members and friends of the church who may reside in the home. The Pastor will appreciate it if parents will assist him in meeting their children during these calls; he will also be glad to meet neighbors or new residents who might be drawn to our church. Let us co-operate to make this work of the Pastor yield the largest possible returns to the Kingdom." For safety, a marked copy of the calendar should be sent to each family by the first mail Monday.

The advantages of this method are more numerous

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than can be named. It forces the pastor to do his calling when the time announced arrives. (People are glad to place unexpected services, marriages or funerals, early or late in the afternoon to enable their eager pastor to get his work done.) A visit anticipated for several days is always appreciated more than an unexpected visit, for which the family may not be ready. A pastor finds his people in and is not compelled to repeat the effort indefinitely. Members of the family who would otherwise be absent stay at home for the pastor's call. Members invite in neighbors and new residents, and many new members are gathered. The plan is systematic, sensible, sane. Give it a fair trial.

The Force that Brings Things to Pass.

Even these two realms do not exhaust the pastor's part in the modern church. In addition to preaching and doing pastoral work exceptionally well, he must be an efficient executive head if his church becomes a producing force. Happy the man who has some good business training before he begins his ministry. He must have a knowledge of forces and how to co-ordinate them. He must know how to secure the highest efficiency from his co-workers from the least expenditure of time and energy; above all he must have the ability to remove inefficient officers without offence, retaining their friendship and support, and must know how to develop result-getting men to fill

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their places. He must be able to give the strength of his personality to his countless auxiliaries without too heavy a draft on his strength and time and he must be able to unite the various factors in his church in such a way as to make them a single force for doing the vital work of the Church,—winning souls to Jesus Christ.

A master of material forces, who handles men and money by thousands, is of the opinion that the crying need of the ministry to-day is *virility* and a closer contact with the forces that move and mould society in all its stratum. Exactly in line with this is the cry of Phillips Brooks, greatest but one of all American preachers, as he sums up a lecture on *The Preacher in His Work*: “And last of all, be vital; be alive, not dead. Do everything that can keep your vitality at its fullest. Even the physical vitality, do not dare to disregard. Pray for and work for fulness of life above everything; full red blood in the body; full honesty and truth in the mind; and the fulness of a grateful love for the Saviour in your heart. Then, however men may set their mark of failure or success upon your ministry, you cannot fail; you must succeed.”

IV.

THE PEOPLE'S PART.

THE largest and most powerful organization in the world today is the Christian Church. Statisticians tell us that her membership is over five hundred millions, or more than one-third of the population of the globe. They tell us also that even this does not even hint at her supremacy and power, for the Christian nations are the most enlightened and powerful of all, and that Christian men and women lead all others in those nations. Most of the wealth of the world, as well as most of the intelligence, is in the possession of Christians. Though their actual achievement is quickly measured, their possible achievement is immeasurable.

As in the world at large, so in the normal American town or city, the Church is the largest and most powerful of all organizations. Her membership always includes the leaders in commerce and learning, in patriotism and philanthropy. But the same proportion between saved and unsaved holds, one-third against two-thirds. It is clear also that the ministers

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cannot reverse this proportion alone, though they strive ever so hard. It is a two-fold work. What is the people's part?

The modern congregation calls to its head, to be God's spokesman and their leader in religious affairs, the minister to whom the Holy Spirit and their own wisdom guides them. If they act independent of or contrary to the divine influence, so much the worse for both. It is a privilege God grants a people, and of which they that are wise always take advantage, to pray and work constantly to increase this man's efficiency and power. No minister worthy the title is as strong as he ought to be or as he wants to be. While here and there may be found a rare individual able to withstand a hurtful influence and grow sweet and strong in spite of it, no man can withstand helpful influences nor escape their benefit. A congregation can make or mar the average minister's career, at least while he is with them, just as a wife can help or hinder her husband. To help him in every way to reach the point of highest efficiency is not only magnanimous and kind, but it is good judgment. It yields large returns. It is a paying investment. It is the act of a wise husbandman who both fertilizes his field and allows no noxious weeds to draw its strength from the growing crops.

Among the countless things a congregation can do for its minister to increase his value to its members, two stand pre-eminent. The first is, Increase

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his efficiency as a pastor. What a man is while out among his people determines very largely what he can do with and for those people when he rises to speak from his pulpit on the Sabbath day. The words of a preacher whom the people love for kindly and thoughtful pastoral ministrations are always eloquent and moving. They hear his heartbeat in every sentence and feel the warm glow of his sympathetic hand-shake.

Even a cold and unresponsive man can be warmed and enthused by a genuine and persistent hospitality. To be frequently invited to a simple meal with the family, which neither costs the hostess too much to prepare nor the minister too much to digest, provides that intimate acquaintance, especially with the younger members of a family, without which no man can serve a people as he ought.

But this is only one phase of a pastor's work; he must be informed about new people and made acquainted with them, about cases of sickness or sorrow where his presence would be appreciated. A pastor has no magic way of knowing these things. In the multitude of his duties he is apt not to know them unless some watchful member of his congregation tells him.

A member of a Baptist family in Chicago once fell sick. He grew worse and worse for two weeks and died. Though they had not notified him of their trouble, the family was so angry because their pastor

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had not called that they sent to a neighboring parish and secured a man whom they had never so much as seen before to conduct the funeral service. Is it any wonder the ready pastor was heart-broken when he learned the facts? They had called the physician when they wanted him, and neighbors, and members of the lodge, but not one word to the pastor. *They said he ought to have known!* How? Why? It is time enough to criticise a pastor when he fails to respond to such cases when notified. Not one pastor in five thousand fails.

The son of a widowed mother in a Western State came home from the East, and after a short illness, which was kept very quiet, died. He was not a member of the Church and had never shown it the slightest attention. Not one word was sent to the mother's pastor, either by the family or close neighbors in the same congregation, though all had telephones and, what is more, frequently met him in service or social circle. The young man died without a word with any minister. The mother confessed that the fault was hers, but several of her neighbors, members of the same congregation, who might have notified the pastor any moment in the two weeks, but who never opened their lips, were so angry because he had not called that they would not treat him civilly. Such treatment is very apt to ruin the best pastor that ever entered a field. He is wont to say, "What's the use trying? People are so unreasonable

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and demand such impossible things. They won't help and yet criticise the slightest shortcoming. I'll just endure the thing and respond when I am called until a more reasonable field opens."

No good man ever reaches such an attitude until he is driven to it by the unreasonableness of his people. They can prevent it and multiply his value to the parish a thousand fold if they will co-operate with him with notification and hospitality and not openly criticise him for failure for which he is in no way responsible. The people must be the complement of the minister, and without this the pastorate will not be complete.

The second way a people can benefit a minister is by making him a better preacher. Just now *preachers* are more needed by our congregations than any other type of servant; men who clearly and forcefully and fearlessly preach the word of God. We sympathize with the minister who, rising to speak in a church but one-fourth filled, said it was the first time he had ever been called upon to address a lumber yard. (It is assumed it was the empty wooden seats he referred to and not the quality of the few listeners who had gathered.) Nothing quickens a man's brain and lends eloquence to his tongue like a *crowd* of eager listeners. One minister used to say to his people if they only knew how much better he would preach if they crowded the house full, they would come from a purely selfish

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motive. *Help your minister preach by being present with a responsive countenance when he rises to speak.* His quickened power will soon be noticed by neighbors and visitors and the attendance problem will be solved. Being an ordinary human being, your minister will be vastly stimulated as a preacher if you freely commend him for good work. If you really do not enjoy a particular sermon, you may still render him a benefit by using the nice discrimination of a tactful woman in southern Iowa who used to tell her pastor with glowing face how much she had enjoyed the *service*. The woman's compliment did much to make her minister a preacher, for it sent him to his books and study each week with a determination to merit it.

It is the old story of a word fitly spoken. The encouragement of his people, their expressed appreciation of any good work he does, an occasional indication that you are expecting great things from him, that you are going to bring your friends to hear his strong sermons, that the standard of his last sermon was so high you do not see how he can reach it again; all such words when honestly and sincerely spoken will bring large returns to any people, for they make your minister exert himself to the utmost to be a great preacher.

A Lesson from the First Century.

When a church wakens to the fact that it is doing

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small things for God, even though its members are doing large things in every other realm in which they move; when it observes that all around it are men and women unsaved who will remain so unless its members draw them into the kingdom; when the consciousness dawns upon it that there is no need for it to be small and weak when it is surrounded by people who would add their strength as soon as the claims of Christianity were brought attractively to their attention, it may well go back to Pentecost and study the young Church that day and the days which immediately followed it.

There was an activity that stirs the blood! *Every member speaking with spirit-filled words to every life he touched, and thousands born into the kingdom in a single day!* Without reviewing at length the familiar incident, let us gather a few of its leading messages to us.

First, it was the Holy Spirit that stimulated them, quickened their old powers and gave them new ones. This Divine Influence is the *sine qua non* of large fruit-bearing in Christian service. Lives filled with this Imperial Force cannot be restrained and cannot be withstood. They are *efficiency* personified. Like Goethe after an hour with Schiller, they think, speak, act with tenfold their usual power. Like a heavenly cordial, He fires every fibre of their being and renders them invincible.

Do not spend your days lamenting the fact that

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this life-quickenning Force has not been given to you. Listen! "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit *to them that ask Him.*" You can have this stimulating and power-multiplying Force in your own life if you want Him badly enough to ask God for Him and respond to His prompting when He comes. For the Holy Spirit is a person as God and Christ are and He acts upon us much as a great earthly friend does who wishes to move us to better things. He strives to put His spirit into us.

A young student of American letters was once thrown for a week into intimate companionship with Lorado Taft, the sculptor. They talked on subjects dearest to the heart of each, and when they separated the youth returned to his home transformed. New ambitions had seized him. His imagination had been quickened, while his mind worked with a rapidity and fruitfulness never experienced before.

Any Christian who will spend a week in such intimate intercourse with the Holy Spirit, as He is revealed in the Word of God, will find himself similarly quickened, and will return to his work a new man. Call it by what name you will, a new birth, a second blessing, a spiritual quickening, or what not, but be sure you have it and that you respond with all your life to its kindling presence.

The second lesson for us from Pentecost is that

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it put every member of the young Church to work. That of itself would bring on a Pentecostal revival in any church to-day. It might be working backwards, but, backwards or forwards, *we must get our work done!*

There is nothing so powerful in all the world as a human life, nothing so appealing, nothing so persuasive. If by any favor of heaven we could get every member of the Church of the Living God to work daily for the conversion of the unsaved, the race would be brought to the foot of the cross in a decade. Think of that, Christians! It is not overdrawn. *All we need to-day to attain what we pray for is that every member shall go to work.*

The secret of the building of the Egyptian Pyramids is the vast number of men who worked on them. A hundred thousand men enthusiastically working toward a single project can do such deeds as shall startle the world. *The moment the millions now Christian determine to work ceaselessly for the conversion of the world, with the powers they have, it will be accomplished.*

Nothing could strengthen the present membership more than to do this work. We say to weak men, Begin conscientiously to exercise the powers you have and you will soon get strong. Men who voluntarily take on great physical strain like an inter-collegiate boat-race or foot-ball game, spend months before in the hardest kind of work, getting the whole system

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strong. Commander Peary says that he had so injured his body to the rigors of Arctic cold that during the long winter on *The Roosevelt* just preceding the final dash for the Pole, he did not build a fire in his cabin stove, though the thermometer ranged from zero to sixty degrees below, while the wind shrieked and howled through the rigging like a multitude of lost souls.

If the Church of Christ wishes to be strong and hardy let her go to work. We have never yet taken hold of this problem of saving the lost as we must if it is accomplished. What are we waiting for? For some other power to do it for us? That will never occur. The plan of God is that *we* shall do it. *Let us do it now!* It will rejoice our God, it will redeem His wandering children; it will strengthen ourselves and the church; it will reform society, it will usher in the millennium.

We should not overlook the fact that the Pentecost-revived church began at once to work on everybody in sight. "Parthians and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians," to every one they could reach they spoke the wonderful works of God. (Acts, 2: 1-11.)

One can imagine some of these people being most

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unlikely material to work on. Doubtless some had said before: "Well, you can never win those Parthians and Medes. Better spend all your time and strength on the residents of Judea who have heard of Christ's mighty works and who are not so far away." So the Church does to-day and so neglects those who need Him most and who would come over to Him quickest if they were rightly approached and urged to come. Oftentimes in revival hours the hearts the community has always supposed to be most hard, melt first, and melting, become the fires that warm scores of kindred hearts. "God will have *all* men to be saved." The hardest to reach as well as the easiest—and possibly He works upon the hardest hearts most, rendering them quickly responsive. Any unsaved man, woman, child, is a worthy and legitimate object of attack, and must not be neglected. When every Christian secures his gift of the Holy Spirit and begins to work on the unsaved life nearest him, no matter how unpromising, the task of saving the world will be half done.

Adjuncts of Great Value.

There are numberless adjuncts to the three elements above enumerated; contributing forces that vastly aid in achieving the results desired. Most effective as a dynamic is the small prayer circle.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed."

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Prayer takes hold on God and claims His glorious promises. It was Maltbie Babcock who said we must do our work on the pattern of the try-square; up the perpendicular toward God and out along the horizontal toward men; that not until we had gone *up* could we go *out* effectually. Prayer gives directness to purpose, quickens steps and unseals lips. No man can pray for another long without doing other things to win him. Times without number has a hard man been touched first by learning that a little circle of earnest men were praying for him. The awe and sacredness of divine things seize him, and the thought of being carried by name to the throne of God urges him to strive to be worthy of it. A few bands of men and women, praying regularly for the unsaved, will do more than the furnace to keep the church warm and hospitable. The *glow* of it will soon reach every life.

There may well be also a number of personal workers clubs in every growing church. These meet frequently the first few weeks and study H. Clay Trumbull's "Individual Work for Individuals," or Howard Agnew Johnston's "Studies for Personal Workers." They are full of suggestion, of wise and workable plans. Many fruitless lives have been transformed by them, becoming notable winners of the unsaved. Zeal must be guided by knowledge; willingness may well seek to profit by the experience of others who have gone before; lives that lack inventiveness may be

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kindled by learning what others have done. Such bands will make up a list of lives they hope to win. As one after another surrenders and enters the Church, his name gives place to yet another. The list is never exhausted. It rather grows longer, for it is a fact of experience that when such a practice is started, lives appear *available* who were not thought of before. It will finally include every unsaved life in the community.

Much use has been made of late of Decision Cards and brief leaflets that may be left with a friend or sent with a kindly note of invitation through the mail. Such printed matter should be easily read, treating only essentials in terse lines or scripture quotations. Argument is not needed and rarely saves a soul. Men know their duty to God and what they ought to do. An arrow of divine truth will often reach their heart when a volume of argument would not get beneath their garments.

Whether in leaflet or conversation, it is better to get to vital things quickly. Long statements confuse the mind and cloud the issue. Quote Jesus on the fact that a new birth is necessary, and John as to how it may be acquired. Dwell less on the sins of men than on the regenerating power of God. All men confess the sin; few know how to stop it or escape its consequences.

But the loudest cry of all is for *work*. Most any plan will do, and even no plan at all, but few lives

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will be won to Christ in any community until the people in the churches begin to work for them. Not one Christian lives that could not each year persuade at least one other soul to accept the Saviour, if he would set out to do it.

Picture to yourself the amazing result! Allowing for all shrinkages and failures, the whole race would be won in this our own generation. How it quickens the blood to think of it! And how we will probably struggle along for centuries because those already Christian will not try to save even one soul a year! Every Korean Christian is striving this year to win at least three. But the Koreans are just out of heathenism and do not know any better! God bless them and crown their efforts with success.

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V.

MISSIONS AND THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT THE SUPREME DYNAMIC.

IN every age men have sought untiringly for the secret spring of great forces. Ponce de Leon would find the fountain of eternal youth, while ten thousand alchemists throughout the ages have sought the secret of transforming common things to gold. In building great cathedrals men have discovered the vital essential to be architectural genius. In erecting great commercial enterprises the desiderata have been found to be brains and gold.

The leaders of Christendom have sought for ages for the force that will do most to build up an efficient church; a church that has life in itself; a church that will grow strong by utilizing its own forces and that will become fruit-bearing as well as self-propagating.

Studying the teachings of the great Founder, men have ever held this primary force to be Love. They quote, at the beginning of their argument, "God so loved the world," and at the end, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." But twenty centuries have come and

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gone and, while love has done much, many churches and whole Christian nations remain weak and inefficient. They with difficulty maintain themselves, to say nothing of winning the world to their Lord.

In these later days, the search for the supreme dynamic has been taken up with new vigor. Men have said: It *must* be found. Out of all their study and experience the same word looms up, big and persistent. The secret of Christian power is Love, but now a new idea attaches itself to the word: It must be *Love in action*. It is not enough that the love be simply felt; it must be revealed in service. Human suffering must be relieved; ignorance, and especially ignorance of God and possible righteousness, must be dispelled; slavery to sin must be abolished.

That Christ has a very large and a very important work for His Church in the world His own words and the history of twenty centuries clearly reveal. "Go ye into all the world" implies elaborate organization and tremendous activity, and, since we are to "evangelize all nations," we are assured that our work is important to the last degree.

It does one good to let the mind swing out to the largeness of this idea. All too many of us live in a narrow and circumscribed world. Our horizon is the nearby limit of our own interests. *Our* world is all too often *the* world.

Here is a conception that leaps all boundaries.

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Like the tides of ocean, it cannot be held in check. It will not stop at family lines, or state lines or national lines. Like sunlight, it leaps from continent to continent, from mountain range to mountain range, till every hamlet, village and farm is included, and the whole world is girdled. Man's interests, ambitions, desires, loves, become world-wide.

Narrowness and inefficiency are well-nigh synonymous terms. The man of few interests is the man of small harvests. The institution, whether commercial organization or church, that is selfish and self-centred is also barren of large or lasting benefits to the world.

To the Master great tasks were congenial. He loved them as the astronomer does his stars. To step, in His beneficent plans, from city to city, from province to province, from nation to nation, until the whole world was reached, was to Him as the joy of a holiday. The labor involved did not check Him; possible suffering did not daunt Him. To lay a redeemed world at the feet of a grateful Father was to have all the reward he craved; was sufficient incentive to drive Him continually to His task.

O matchless ambition! No stain of selfishness is here. The flesh, with all its sensuous desires, has been subdued; the full flame of altruistic love burns pure and free; a life has appeared that thinks not of itself, but of the service it can render others; that is ambitious only to bury itself in one supreme effort

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to buy back a sin-sold race. Such an ambition God can approve; such an ambition he can bless; behind such an ambition he does not hesitate to throw the weight of his almighty power that it may be realized.

In addition to this, Christ knew the value of work, both to the worker and to the object his work affects. He saw that hard work is essential to the largest, fullest life; He saw that only by hard work could the rebellious hearts of rebellious men be won back to God.

To His followers, therefore, His word was: "*Go, —evangelize,—everybody.*" For faithful work along other lines He devised many rewards. A quiet heart; a sense of forgiveness of sins; an assurance of victory over the world; but as a reward for obeying the Great Commission He provided the greatest of all returns: Success. "Lo, I will go with you, even to the end of the accomplishment of this mighty task." We are not shoved off to perform a service which our Master is unwilling to do. It is not menial labor with which He is unwilling to soil His hands. Rather, we are to work together, Master and servant side by side, the Master not only instructing and inspiring the servant, but putting His own hand and His great heart to the task until it is completed.

Man works with greater vigor when he knows he will ultimately succeed. Discouragements cannot chill his heart or weaken his arm. The magnet of

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assured success draws him on; the promise of a Father's "Well done" makes harmony all along the discordant highway. God has not left his toiling servants without encouragement.

A World-Encircling Task.

The spirit of Christianity demands that the whole world be saved. It cannot be content with half a race when the other half is lying in sin and misery. Had Christ been willing to stay in the safe retreat of the home at Bethany, saying in His heart that He had done pretty well already, He might have escaped the sufferings of Calvary. The idea did not even occur to Him. To save Himself suffering and even death at the cost of a world's salvation was too base a temptation to touch His noble heart. Since He *could* redeem a race He *would* do it at whatever personal sacrifice. *It was by this complete sacrifice, this giving of His whole life for the redemption of the whole race that Christ won his power.* The Church is just awakening to the fact that, since all power resides in Him, she may secure that power for herself by obeying Him; that *obedience to the Great Commission is the supreme dynamic in building a working church.*

The greatest mistake the Church of Christ has made in the past has been her neglect of the weak on the seemingly reasonable ground that she needed

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all her men and money to maintain and strengthen herself. The mistake has not been confined to the few; it has been the creed of priest and layman alike. It is incomprehensible in face of the Master's well-known teaching: "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake and the Gospel's shall find it."

It is significant that laymen began to notice this thing before the ministry wakened to it. At a recent convention Robert E. Speer quoted Jacob Riis as saying: "Every once in a while I hear some one growl against foreign missions because the money and the strength put into them are needed at home. I did it myself when I did not know better. God forgive me. I know better now; and I will tell you how I found out. I became interested in a strong religious awakening in my own old city of Copenhagen; and set about investigating it. It was then that I learned what others had learned before me, and what was the fact there; that for every dollar you give away to convert the heathen abroad, God gives you ten dollars' worth of purpose to deal with your brother at home."

To the contention that other religions are as good for the people who follow them as Christianity would be, the incontrovertible answer is: Jesus did not think so. Confucianism, Brahminism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, had been in the world for centuries before He came. If they could have saved the

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race surely God would have let them do it and not have made the supreme sacrifice He did in sending His own Son to redeem men by the humility of the flesh and the agonies of Gethsemane and Calvary. No, the sacrifice and service of Jesus were necessary; they constitute the only sufficient provision for a world-redemption and it is our business to let all men know that this full provision for their salvation has been made.

Every mile we stop short of the limits of the world, every soul short of the whole race, cuts us off from that much of power that comes from a sense that we are at last doing our whole duty. In the address referred to above Robert Speer said again: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. There is one Saviour of the world and only one; therefore, he is the Saviour of all the world. Those whom He has saved must carry Him to those who do not know that He can save. If this is not our gospel, we have no gospel. It is only a gospel for all the world that is a gospel for any part of the world. To narrow the right to the gospel to a race, or to assert any one race's preferential claim upon the gospel, is to destroy the gospel. If one land is Christ's, all lands are Christ's. If Christ is one man's, Christ is all men's. To make all lands His, and to make Him all men's, is the primary duty of the Church."*

*Robert E. Speer in *The World Call to Men of To-day*.

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Many Church-Favoring Forces.

Many forces in modern society are favorable to the advancement of the Church. She enjoys favorable legislation in all Christian countries. Her property is exempt from taxation; she is granted protection from disturbance in her regularly appointed services; laws against Sabbath desecration add to her influence on young and old.

She is helped also by the general interest the Scriptures arouse. Their immense claim attracts men; their rich thought and perfect language draw thinking men to study them, and rarely indeed does an honest student refuse to believe what the Bible teaches.

An even greater force in pushing the Church forward is the splendid consecration of so large a portion of her membership. Men give time and money; women give loving service and substance. The world sees and is drawn to an institution that leads to such devotion.

But higher than all of these is another force which adds to the Church's power more than they all; *the stimulating, arousing, Spirit-getting returns from her missionary activity.* The reason why this is so may be a matter of discussion, but not the fact that it is. The churches that are alive to-day; that are growing spiritually and numerically, are the churches that are giving most in lives and money for the

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evangelization of the world. Generosity abroad means power at home. The reflex value of missionary giving is as great as the direct value. When a church comes to realize that it is linked with God in the salvation of the world, that church cannot stand still. It has within it that which refuses to sit at ease, and we have yet to hear of a generously missionary church that is not a rapidly growing church.

While saying this concerning the reflex value of missions, it must not be understood that we underestimate their direct value. "The sublimest spectacle which the world presents to-day," says Dr. Ellinwood, "is that of scores of great Christian bodies working side by side, on all continents, and in the islands of the sea, printing their Bibles in three hundred languages, establishing schools and colleges, hospitals and churches, and demonstrating the fact that the gospel bears the same precious fruits among men of every kindred, tongue and tribe."

To see a whole people, as, for instance, the inhabitants of the Fiji Islands, transformed in a quarter of a century from naked cannibals to peace-loving, law-abiding, God-fearing Christians, is to answer forever the carping cry of the critics who say Foreign Missions is a waste of both men and money. No time can be too precious, no money too valuable, if nations can thus be born again in one generation. Society is not many, but one. When one part is

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lifted all is lifted. If there were no other benefits rendered redeemed men than their new place and relation in society, it would repay all the outlay. No heart that is really Christian can shut itself against the despairing cry of heathen life. It is the wail of an infant for the strong arms of its mother; the cry of the weak for the help of the strong. To refuse to help is to prove to the world that the heart is not yet fully Christian.

But to turn our eyes again to the benefit to the Church which arises from unselfish missionary endeavor, we are reminded of the Master's own simile: "Except a kernel of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." What is that but to say: The church that thinks only of itself and its own welfare; that will not sacrifice its own comfort for the salvation of others; that will not exercise the spirit of sacrifice of the Christ, must remain small and weak, but if it is willing to forget itself; to live for others; to deny itself comforts that other men may be saved; it shall not only arouse its own members to a hitherto unknown measure of generosity, but shall attract scores of lives by its Christ-like spirit, so that whereas before it was small and weak, now it shall be large and powerful.

Examples that Prove the Doctrine.

A certain church in the heart of the Golden Corn

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Belt of Illinois was moving along a few years ago at a comfortable and satisfying pace. Congregations were good, money for current expenses was ample, and a few people were uniting with the church each year on confession of faith. Following the now famous Omaha Men's Missionary Convention, the pastor suggested to his good people that they do something more for God along foreign mission lines; something a little more nearly commensurate with their ability and with what they were doing in commercial, social and political life. He proposed the Omaha standard of an average of five dollars per member for the year. It meant something over two thousand five hundred dollars; twice or three times as much as the church had ever given before. Startled for a moment, the people quickly rallied; said they would do it, and that night telegraphed the Board of their substantial advance. It was a great day for the Church. Hearts were stirred that had long lain dormant. The pastor foresaw an up-rising.

Monday evening he was waited upon by two eager elders. The people, they said, were fired with a new spirit. They wanted some special services, the sooner they could begin the better. The pastor proposed the securing of a trained evangelist. They said, No; it was not necessary. His own preaching would be enough. The meeting started the very next Sunday; ran for two weeks. The people came as never before.

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They worked for their unsaved friends. At the communion following a greater number joined the church on confession of faith than had come in the two years preceding. Audiences increased, money was more plentiful for every other Board. Gradually the church awakened to the fact that it had had the best revival in its history, and all because it had begun to obey the Great Commission and do its adequate share in carrying the Gospel to the whole world. Nothing will so waken the evangelistic spirit at home.

Perhaps the most celebrated case of quick returns for enlarged missionary giving, considering what has subsequently grown out of it, is that of the First Presbyterian Church of Wichita, Kansas. Responding at last to several urgent requests, the then pastor, Dr. Charles Edwin Bradt, has sent the following account with privilege to publish. It is given here with the prayer that its reading may stimulate still other pastors and churches to put God to the test at the point of His promises.

Several years ago conditions prevailed in Wichita which made the continued existence of any institution, however free from internal embarrassment, more or less precarious. But the First Presbyterian Church was burdened with many thousands of dollars of debt, with no assets that had any marketable value. [The members, though heroic and generous, had per-

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sonal obligations and responsibilities which taxed them almost beyond the limit of endurance. These conditions made the problem of a bare existence as a church organization and the maintenance of the stated services of the church a great question. The fact is, such an existence had not been financially sustained for some time previous, and in consequence a floating indebtedness, rising higher and higher each year, was threatening to submerge the church and extinguish the lighted candlestick, or cause its removal. When, added to this state, they looked not upon a fair harbor in which they might anchor for a time until the storm was passed, but upon the frowning cliffs and rocks of a large bonded debt of \$18,000, for which they had nothing to show, and with which they had no means, apparently, to grapple, it is not surprising that they were well-nigh discouraged.

At this time, however, the Lord appeared unto the church, as truly as he appeared unto Paul of old, and said to her what he said to Paul:

“Rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto

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God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

In the face of these facts the doctrine was preached, that Christ had conditioned His presence and His almighty power, the Holy Spirit, upon practical willingness, on the part of His people, to obey the Great Commission. One cold, bleak January morning the pastor crossed the threshold of the church with this conviction in his heart, prepared with a message for his discouraged people, that their salvation as a church, financially, and every other way, depended upon their taking the little flour they had in the barrel and the little oil they had in the cruse and undertaking to feed first of all the starving millions of heathen souls with the bread of life. From the sacred precincts of the empty pews and galleries of the church that pastor seemed to hear whispers as he passed along the aisles of the church to the session room to meet the elders for prayer before the service. The import of those whisperings

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seemed to be that the pastor had gone crazy, that he had lost his mental balance. But at every step a voice within said, "Lo, I am with thee." And he knew it to be the voice of the Son of God. When he reached the session room he looked in the faces of those men of God for encouragement in the delivery of his message.

As they prayed eyes were filled with tears, and as the pastor turned his face to the wall to hide their flow, through his tears he saw the Son of God, and again he heard Him say, "Lo, I am with thee." And the Lord did stand with him while he delivered his message that morning, and Christ revealed Himself as a world Saviour to the people. Whereupon this church was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but undertook to show unto them of China, as well as at Wichita and of our own land, that they should repent and turn to God and do works meet for repentance. That very day the church took for support a missionary pastor on the foreign fields, Dr. Hunter Corbett, of Chefoo, China. And that very year, too, the church closed its books without a deficit in its current expenses, and with its floating debt removed—a condition it had not enjoyed for ten years previous, according to the showing of the treasurer. The next year the Church more than doubled the amount contributed to foreign missions the previous year, and added to its pay roll a home

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missionary, and that year it removed its bonded debt, closing the year with money in the treasury and all financial obligations met.

The philosophy of the church's salvation at that time was this: The church became enamoured with Jesus Christ and the work for which he gave his life, and in consequence she entered upon a life of faith to give even the little meal she had in the barrel and the oil in the cruse for Jesus Christ, and to go with Christ even unto the uttermost parts of the earth to help save lost men. In consequence Christ verified his promise to be with the church.

The foreign pilgrimage cost the church during the following ten years about \$25,000, with which she sustained four American foreign missionaries and about twenty-five native pastors and assistants, and much other work. The church last year contributed an average of over five dollars a member to foreign missions.

But the fact that the church went so far away from home in her interests and with such an increase of contributions is not the only thing that has caused comment, or awakened curiosity, not to say wonder, in the minds of some people. This, to be sure, was done at a time when the church was financially embarrassed at home and her very life and existence threatened. Hence it seemed to some suicidal and foolish. But during the very time, by reason of this same love for Jesus Christ, born of a fresh vision

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of the Son of God, revealed through His word in the clear light of the Great Commission, the church was enabled to do as much for home missions as for foreign, and upward of \$25,000 during those ten years was put upon the altar of God for this work also.

But this was not yet the most astonishing result of becoming enamoured of Jesus Christ when the church perceived the heavenly vision and received the Great Commission. So greatly was the church wrought upon by the Spirit taking the things of Jesus and showing his attractive beauty unto her, namely, His self-denial for the lost world, that she was enabled to contribute not only thus to further the gospel at home and abroad, but out of what seemed her poverty she brought so generously that during those ten years upward of \$75,000 was contributed by her to sustain the preaching of the gospel and establish the kingdom of God in Wichita. So that the church had not only no debt, but she maintained in Wichita one of the largest plants doing business for God anywhere in the United States, with a pastor, two assistant pastors, a minister of music, two office assistants, a city missionary, a central church of 1,400 members, a Bible school with about one hundred officers and teachers, and seven hundred scholars, a men's department, with a men's club and two boys' clubs, a girls' industrial department, a girls' club, two Christian Endeavor Societies, two

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ladies' societies, a Young People's Missionary Society, a Junior Missionary Society, a Children's Mission Band, a Bible training department, issuing many thousands of pages of printed matter each year, and a missionary magazine.

A similar story is told by every pastor and church that has tried the experiment. How long we have been in learning a thing which now appears so simple! Christ knew the needs of the world better than any one else, and what He was willing to reward men most for doing. Many a vision of the world's condition had been granted Him. He did not want it as a material possession—that he spurned in the hour of His great temptation—but He did crave it as a spiritual possession. Men's soul-suffering appealed to Him. Could He free them from the love of sin? Could He break from their lives the shackles of wickedness? Could He make them see the insignificance of the things of this world as compared with the glory of His Father's Kingdom? *That* would be a work worth doing; *that* would be worth the loss of all things else. Starting to win man back to His Father, He could not be satisfied with less than all men, so, to make their winning more sure, He said to those He left to finish the work He could only begin: "If you will go right on and do this most important work; forget and even deny yourselves in your eagerness to get my plan into the hearts of all men, I will not only go with you and help you

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till the task is done, but I will give to you the richest blessings of my Father's Kingdom. For other services you will get much; for this supreme service you will get most. He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

Now the secret is out. It is becoming better known every day. It is being proved true by more and more congregations willing to try. There is no longer any reason for churches remaining small and weak. They may be large and powerful if they will follow God's plan. "Go and I will be with you." He does not promise to be with churches that refuse to go to the extent, not of their selfishness, but of their ability. The churches that obey suddenly rise up as by a new might. It is the might of God Himself, which no adversary can withstand and which wins all men. Men and churches that so obey as to win the presence and power of the God-Spirit become mighty in both deed and influence.

VI.

THE SPIRIT OF EVANGELISM.

THE amazingly rapid growth of the Church in the early centuries is found to be due in large part to the spirit of evangelism which animated every member. The heresy that Christianity is something a man should get as a personal possession and selfishly keep was not yet abroad. It was Good News from a far country, and whoever got it first was not content until he had told it persuasively to all his friends.

True, it had not yet been abused. Men had never yet used it as a cloak to hide sin, or a coigne for personal advantage. Not yet did men profess it as a faith only to deny it by their life. It was pure and undefiled, while every life possessing it was so true and strong, so powerful against temptation and so brave in trial, that men on every hand said: "If this new religion can do that for me, I want it."

Is it not possible for the Church in the twentieth century to take on the fervor of the first? Too long has she been content if she prospered. She has allowed self-maintenance to consume her time and substance. Too long she has left her pastors to do

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the work of soul-winning, content if they brought into the Kingdom a dozen souls a year. Too long she has criticised those pastors for not doing more of that which is her work as much as theirs, and which they can never do completely without her help. It was to the whole body of Christians Christ spoke the parable of the leaven. Until we all begin to impart the Christ nature we have acquired to those we touch, the whole world will not be Christian.

No religious organization, however perfect, can be truly called a Working Church that is not primarily doing the work Christ set for it; that is not striving earnestly and continuously to win men to Jesus; that is not shot through and through with the spirit of Evangelism. There is more than grim humor in the explanation of the old restaurant keeper that she could sell ice-cream cheaper than her competitors because she saved the cost of ice by setting her freezers against the walls of a nearby church. A cold church is a libel on the Master. It gives a false picture of Him to the world. It drives men from Him when it ought to draw them. Dignity and formalism are the refuge of small lives. Large ones can afford to be open and hospitable.

Let the Leader Lead.

No pastor dare close his eyes to the fact that what he is in this regard, his people are very likely to be. How rarely does a people have greater zeal

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in soul-winning than the minister they have called to their head! How quickly do they give it up when the successor to a soul-winner feels that "all this fuss" is unnecessary. There at least it will be "like priest, like people."

In our day, one confesses with keen regret, many a fine fellow in the ministry has sacrificed efficiency as a soul-winner on the altar of modern scholarship. No sane man can object to the highest learning, but when it cools a man's ardor, obscures an intimate vision of the Master's face, weakens his faith in God or the Bible, it has done the servant of Jesus an irreparable injury.

"The bird with the broken pinion,
Never soared so high again."

A minister can be forgiven for being ignorant of the latest things in Biblical criticism; he cannot be forgiven if he lacks an intimate personal acquaintance with Him whose representative he was ordained to be. No minister need hope to build up a strong working church who has not in his heart the spirit of the evangelist. History is a unit on this point. He may create a perfect social organism, a successful religious club, but it will never be a *working church*.

And, therefore, the minister who hopes to render large service to the Kingdom and who has not the heart of an evangelist, *must get it*. This is more possible to-day than ever before. Summer schools

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and Bible conferences abound, where Spirit-filled men reveal the possibilities of human organs. Hearts that have never been warm, or that have grown cold in the Arctic regions of religious indifference, are made to throb and glow. Men whose ministry has been a function, who have ground out sermons and marriage and funeral ceremonies like nickel-fed automatons, waken to the fact that the ministry may be a live, fruit-bearing thing; that instead of dying with *ennui*, they may glow continually with the consciousness of achievement. The enthusiasm of twice-born men is contagious. It makes the man, in any way responsible for the transformation, tingle with new life himself and, from a position of weary suffering, he comes to look upon the ministry as the greatest work in the world, the *only* work worthy a lifetime of effort.

Returning from such Christ-Schools the awakened minister goes back to his New Testament. What a fascinating book it has suddenly become! Before he had hard work to fill the preaching appointments; now he has so many sermons he cannot find occasions enough on which to preach them! Before, men said of his sermons, "What finished literary productions." Now they say, "What gripping, heart-searching appeals." Before they said, "Our church is prospering." Now they say, "Our church is *growing*—new lives every Sunday." Before they said, "Our minister is a perfect Christian gentleman." Now they say,

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“Our minister is a power for God, a true servant of Christ, a winner of souls.”

His prayer life also will be transformed. The minister must pray so often for and before his people, there is grave danger lest he cease to pray in secret for himself. Christ never let go His prayer-grip on God. Other things could wait while He went into a mountain apart to pray. When the urgency was great and the issue of universal and eternal consequence, he tarried in that soul-quickenning communion *all night*. There is many a good man in the Christian ministry to-day who thinks he needs more learning to make him a power, when what he really needs is more communion with his heavenly Father. He knows enough of the things of men, but he knows too little of the things of God. World-knowledge may come through study, but God-knowledge comes through “being silent to God” and letting Him instruct us out of His fullness and love.

The American pulpit has furnished numerous cases in the past twelve or fifteen years of able men who have suddenly changed the whole tenor of their preaching. Brilliant before, they have suddenly become powerful; actually preventing serious, heart-searching thought on the part of their hearers before, by keeping them enraptured with scintillating paragraphs, they have suddenly begun to grip men’s hearts, make them forget everything but the God’s-message that pours at white heat from their lips.

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One was transformed during a long illness when, walking close by the gates of death, he was made to think of eternal verities and the shortness of time in which to get the race back to God. Another was at length awakened by the barrenness of a really brilliant ministry. He saw the world could never be saved by such ministry, so he went to a new field where conditions favored soul-winning. Across the sea a third, who had laid the world under obligation by his erudite studies in English literature, was driven at length to see that that only is preaching which has in it the evangelistic note. These three men, who before were heard by the few, are now reaching thousands. Men are being born anew under their ministry every week, and they feel that now at last they are true representatives of Him who commanded us not simply to preach, but to evangelize the nations.

The Minister's Special Opportunities.

While the Spirit-filled, soul-hungry minister will not wait for any special time or place in which to work for the salvation of his people, he will take advantage of three special services in which he will persuasively tell the story of the cross and strive to win men to the Christian life; the Sunday morning preaching hour, the Sunday evening preaching hour, and the midweek prayer service. How shall he conduct them that they be not simply religious func-

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tions, but heart-stirring, soul-arousing, second-birth-begetting, religious meetings?

In the average church the minister will have his largest audience of the week at the Sunday morning preaching hour. The people have cleansed themselves from the world's grime, donned fresh garments and presented themselves in the house of God, as nearly new creatures as men can make themselves. Their very thoughts have changed and, if ever in their lives they are prepared to receive a message from God, it is at this hour. True, the majority are often very slow in responding to the spirit of the aroused preacher. One would hardly go so far as John Ruskin and say they must be raised from the dead; perhaps *coma* would not be too strong. At all events the people are present, and the minister has his chance with them. What will he do with it?

There are two or three things he *may* do. One is, preach a very orthodox sermon on an incontrovertible text, sing the regulation number of hymns without undue acceleration, suffer an anthem, take the collection, pronounce the benediction, and send the people home on excellent terms with themselves. This is a very easy and a very pleasant thing to do. It saves wear and tear on both pastor and people, and gives rise to few controversies. Many pastors adopt it; especially those who have ceased to aspire, or who have found that acquiescence often wins more praise than aggressiveness. Such ministers are usu-

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ally faultless before the people, however guilty they may be before God.

Some of us are grateful that there is another thing a minister can do when the Sabbath morning opportunity is before him. He can make it a service when he "feeds the sheep"; he can make it a service when he "preaches to Christians"; he can follow the customary formula of scripture reading, hymn and prayer, but he can put so much of the spirit of God into these that men and women will be alert and eager for some heart-message from their King when he rises to speak. "The newspapers are packed with world-news, and the libraries are packed with literature, so give us a message filled with the Spirit of God, with the promise and the plan of eternal life." That is the plea of the sea of faces now turned toward you, my Christian minister. Will you respond to it? Or through some mistaken notion that men are tired of the Gospel message, or through selfish desire to astonish them and win glowing encomiums by brilliant oratory, will you deny your ordination vows and spend this precious opportunity in tickling the fancy of the light-minded or lulling into greater quietude hearts that should be doing great things for God?

"I always go to hear Dr. Stultum when I can," said a gentleman to a friend concerning a minister of great learning and piety. "He always sends me home so quieted and at peace with the world."

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Yes, but, my dear sir, how about the great host of the unsaved crowded about the very church door? Christ came not to send peace on earth, but a sword, until every enemy of our God is vanquished and peace reigns because all hearts are at one with Him! The minister may well make some part of every Sunday morning service quieting to troubled souls, and he may well make an occasional service so all through, but he will utterly fail as a representative of Christ if, when he has people before him, he does not rouse them to the point of restrainless enthusiasm on the subject of winning the lost, of moving the unawakened or the indifferent to active association with the Christ.

He cannot do this with half an hour of pious platitudes, and the customary hymn—scripture reading—anthem—prayer—sermon—benediction service, carried on at the usual poor dying rate. Nothing will more effectually lull a people to sleep.

The minister who has drunk deep at the fountain of spiritual life will come before his people Sabbath morning determined to stir them to greater love for God and men. He will be so full of his eager desire to see men born again that his spirit will permeate the service, and his people will feel it. He will not start in to quiet them, but to rouse them; he will use all the arts known to proper preaching; he will grind his arrows of truth to cutting sharpness, and

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will see that every one has a barb on it, so that it cannot be gotten out of the life until it has produced an effect. The arrows will be drawn to the head and sent to the heart-target with a bow of earnestness that will bring conviction, both to saved and unsaved; saved to save others and unsaved to save themselves.

Why should there not be conversions at the morning service? Why should they not be expected and eagerly worked for? A good many customs of the Church will have to be changed before our communities, and so the nations of the world, are saved. If the invitation is not given during the service it should be announced that the pastor and a committee from the officers will tarry in a convenient place at the close of the service to confer with any who may desire to know more of the way of life, or be received into the Church.

Too long we have earnestly invited people to accept the Saviour, and unite with the Church, and then have sent them home without an opportunity to accept the invitation. In many cases they cannot be present on the time set for formal hearing; in others, though the heart is right, timidity holds them back. It sounds very pious to say, "they should be brave enough to do anything the Church requires to get into touch with the Lord," but *it is a sin for the Church to lose them when they are not.* The

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shepherd opens the gate *wide* that the flock may enter the sheepfold. The Church may well follow his example.

The Sabbath Evening Opportunity.

There is a widespread and very wholesome idea that the Sabbath evening service should be different from the morning. All nature loves variety, and human nature most of all. It is entirely possible for a minister, who cannot draw his people back to a second service by his preaching power, to do so by putting the emphasis on other features. By general consent the evening service may be openly evangelistic. This gives the pastor the opportunity he needs to be his own evangelist. At least half the sermons any minister preaches should be evangelistic, and while he must not rob his morning service of this soul-winning spirit, most of them will naturally be given at night. Let the people understand that the Gospel message may be heard in some form every Sabbath evening, and then *never disappoint them*.

The best possible preparation for a Gospel sermon is a half hour's hearty singing of Gospel songs, under a good leader. No more attractive feature can be added to a service, nor one that will do more to draw a crowd week after week. The singing must be spirited and full of good cheer. Formal anthems may well give way to Gospel solos and duets, and every song should contain a story that grips the

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heart and contributes to a reverent, receptive spirit. There must be no strained humor or striving after mirth, but if anything occurs to cause a good-natured smile, do not restrain or rebuke it. Smiles and tears are twin brothers and are always found close together. One eminent preacher of the past generation is quoted as saying that if some one could be found to arouse the congregation to wholesome laughter, he would undertake to arouse them to wholesome tears within five minutes' time. Let the people be natural in this service. It will contribute immeasurably to its power and fruitfulness.

The sermon must be full of human interest. Hearts are not won by abstractions. What wins at Water Street and Pacific Garden missions is the testimony of redeemed men. The minister may tell of these redemptions. Such stories as Harold Begbie gives in *Twice-Born Men* are interest-compelling. No audience can remain indifferent under them. Nor do the people ever tire of a fresh and timely telling of the conversions and experiences of Bible characters. Let the imagination play within reasonable bounds and do not spend too much time with your thoroughly good commentary. A commentary may do very well as a guiding star, but if the preacher uses it as wind and fills his sails more than once from its contents the people will quickly recognize old friends and give their attention to their own thoughts. An audience once lost is rarely ever re-

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gained. As the air loses its freshness, tired flesh is sure to assert itself. The man of power is quick to notice any slackening of interest, and is ready with an apt and stimulating story that keeps attention at flood.

Invitations to accept the Saviour and enter upon the Christian life should either close the sermon, being pressed with earnest and tender solicitude, or an after-meeting announced, the singing of which begins in the front of the church or in a convenient lecture-room the moment the benediction is pronounced. Personal workers must supplement the pastor's invitations, going with penitents to the altar or inquiry room. *Without this aid at least fifty per cent. of the possible harvest will be lost.*

A right minister will expect results from every sermon he preaches, if not in open conversions, at least in secret convictions which will soon appear on the surface. Go after the people. Determine to win them. Make resistance impossible. The Master said, "Compel them to come in." It must, of course, be the compulsion of a surrendered and ready will, drawn irresistibly to the Saviour. Only after such services will the minister have full right to sing the precious song of the fathers: "One More Day's Work for Jesus."

Reviving Our Most Valuable Service.

The third opportunity referred to is now almost

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lost to the church. Prayer-meeting no longer starts a spirit in the average follower of Jesus. In his philosophy he needs money and social intercourse, and physical relaxation, so much more than he needs prayer, that to give an evening to waiting before God and communing with Him is considered unnecessary if not indeed absurd. *On the part of those familiar with the Church's needs, this is recognized as one of the chief sources of her present weakness and inefficiency.* Not so much that a midweek prayer-meeting is not kept up, but that the spirit of prayer no longer permeates the life of the Church. Christians neglect to nourish their religious life on communion with God, a thing as necessary to its healthy growth as food is to the body.

One feels sometimes that the ministers themselves are largely to blame for this. Thousands of the splendid fellows have considered and talked about the prayer-meeting as a subordinate service. They have made little or no preparation for it and have had no scruples against leaving it in the hands of anybody, however unfitted, who could be induced to "lead." A few random songs, a lengthy scripture lesson, read not for itself, but as a space-filler; a rambling exhortation or a blundering apology about having no time to prepare, many "volunteer" prayers and a few time-worn testimonies, can we wonder greatly that the "lecture-room" has not been overcrowded!

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The two incidents following are typical. The pastor of a large church visited a friend on a struggling city mission field. When prayer-meeting evening came there was a good crowd present and the missionary worker gave evidence that he had given as much time and care to preparation as many do to their Sunday morning sermon. The visiting pastor was impressed, but on the way home said to his friend: "I enjoyed your prayer-meeting, but I think I ought to warn you that you are making a mistake. You cannot afford to give so much time to this *unimportant service* as you must have given to speak as you did to-night."

Why? and *why unimportant?* The greatest need the Church has to-day is to spend more time in intimate communion with God. No time, no effort, is too great for the minister to spend on his midweek prayer service. He had better neglect his Sunday morning sermon, so far as the welfare of the church is concerned.

A very wealthy member in one of our great city churches invited her pastor and one or two influential members to a grand opera box-party on a Wednesday evening. The flattered pastor, with an all-too-common disregard of his midweek prayer-meeting, accepted the invitation, trusting to Providence to take care of His own. One of his yet more wealthy members graciously refused the invitation, saying that she had a permanent engagement at the church

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prayer-meeting on Wednesday evenings. The party was called off, and the embarrassed pastor left to make such explanations as he could. When our pastors think more of the prayer-meeting the people will. Here again the leader *must lead*.

There is no reason why Middle Ages methods should be continued in the modern prayer-meeting. Let the pastor determine and announce to his people that the midweek service is to be raised to its rightful place. Let him prepare a Bible Study that has blood in it, and that can be given by careful husbanding of moments in about twenty of them. Let him use a live, spiritual Gospel song book. Let the accompanist be as good as the church affords and, if he be not a good leader of music himself, let the minister see that the best available is on hand. Let there be nothing hap-hazard about the service. A Gospel solo by a sweet soprano voice, some bright thoughts by leaders in the world's religious life, abundant opportunity for every heart that will pray to do so.

(It would seem that personal testimonies that have been in circulation, say for more than seventeen years last March, might, out of consideration for all concerned, be withdrawn. It is a fair question whether some other form of edification should not now be given an equally fair trial.)

And now for two innovations that have been found of incalculable value to one Church builder. When

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the regular features of the prayer-meeting have been spiritedly put through, announce that as a part of the service, and before the benediction, the company will rise and have five or eight minutes of social intercourse. Strangers will be welcomed and new acquaintances made. Many will use the time for tactful personal work among the unsaved.

(Oh, yes, there will be strangers and unsaved also in such a prayer-meeting as here outlined. The people are not so much afraid of prayer as some very good men seem to think.)

When the time announced for the social greeting has elapsed, and not a moment later, have the organist strike the chords of a familiar hymn. This will draw the attention of the people, and while they remain standing, wherever they chance to be at the moment, let the minister complete his announcements, concluding with the statement that after the benediction the pastor and officers would be happy to meet any who care to inquire further about the Christian life. Here again the invitation to the Christian life should be immediately followed by an opportunity to accept it. Pastors who have never tried the plan will be amazed how many worthy people will take advantage of it, especially if he and his personal workers make good use of the social period.

“And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto myself.” Distinguish, brethren, between lifting up the minister and lifting up the Master. Jesus alone

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has drawing power and he has so much that, if persuasively presented, few hearts can withstand His appeal. After every such service there will be some wishing to learn more of the Way of Life.

The Personal Interview.

In addition to the three opportunities above outlined, there remains one of almost, if not quite, equal value,—the personal interview. It is amazing how few modern ministers grant it, or know aught of its peculiar value. Few burdened or questioning souls are able or willing to speak of their real difficulty in a public meeting or even privately to a personal worker in an open inquiry room. Natural timidity interferes or the intimate nature of the trouble. Oftentimes an hour or a whole evening is necessary to lead the penitent to unburden the heart that hidden difficulties may be removed.

The wise minister therefore will let it be understood that at certain hours several days in the week, say from one-thirty to two-thirty, each afternoon from Tuesday to Friday (there should be at least one evening hour for the convenience of those who must work all day), he will gladly meet for quiet talks on personal problems, at his home if possible, any of his people who desire to meet him. When the time arrives and pastor and inquirer are face to face, the pastor may easily and quickly come to close quarters: "Let me see,—what is it that is troubling

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you?" or "Now tell me frankly all that is in your heart."

In nine cases out of ten the minister will be amazed at the simplicity of the difficulty and the ease with which it may be swept away. When men seek a personal interview they are not far from the Kingdom, and the earnest pastor will be able to open its doors quickly. While austerity is to be avoided, the interview should be as impressive as possible. Ordinarily it should not close without bended knees and earnest prayers and a hand-grip that will send the inquirer away with rich memories as well as an awakened soul.

And so the earnest pastor will go on from service to service, from ministry to ministry. He will be modern, patriotic, full of sunshine and good cheer, while at the same time he will have as a precious burden on his heart the conversion of every life he touches. If the right Christian should be in a continual attitude of prayer, *the right pastor should be in a continual attitude of evangelism*. Like his Master, his business is to seek and to save souls that are lost, and that day is barren indeed that does not show some soul born anew or some definite progress made toward that most vital consummation. The pastor-evangelist is the most valuable and the most welcome man in the ministry to-day.

VII.

SOCIAL LIFE; THE SPIRIT OF FELLOWSHIP.

HOW much shall moulders of Church customs concede to the fact that man is a social being and that, if he does not find congenial social intercourse in connection with his Church life, he will seek it elsewhere? Very many eminently respectable Church members in our day insist that the simple fact that another is a member of the same congregation entails no social obligation whatever. All such are represented by that president of the Ladies' Aid who, when asked if a certain woman to whom she had coldly nodded on the street were a friend of hers replied: "O dear, no, simply a Church acquaintance." On the other hand stands the fact that a human being cannot lay aside his social nature when he happens to want to attend Church, and, if he finds no response to this nature when he enters the house of God, is apt to consider it cold and unchristlike.

Should one stop to discuss the point raised by some that, the Church being a religious institution, it should be kept wholly for the service of the soul? They would have worshippers enter in funereal procession and retire when the service is ended without

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so much as a glance of recognition toward their friends. One has much sympathy for those who speak against using the time immediately before and after the service for loud general conversation which touches upon everything from the baby's new tooth to the latest fashion in hats or the batting averages of the stars in the major leagues! It would seem only decorous for the congregation to leave the house of God without the gayety and babble of an afternoon tea. But that there should be no interchange of good wishes, no warm hand clasps, no quiet meeting of new friends, no earnest invitations to return, would hardly seem to be the mind of the Master who always used the place and the time for furthering His Father's business.

The New Commandment: Love One Another.

There being no plain utterance from the lips of Christ or the early founders of the Church on the subject of social life among members of a congregation, one must draw conclusions from the general nature of their teaching and the customs that prevailed among themselves. The first point may be gained from the fact that it was the plan of Jesus that a very intimate relationship should exist between those who confessed Him and entered His Church. This was unmistakable from the fact that as He was giving directions for their new life in Him He said: "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one

another." That members of His Kingdom on earth could obey this new and last commandment and at the same time treat other members with coldness or indifference is unthinkable. If we have the spirit of the Christ, we will be open, hospitable, genial.

Further evidence that social life in the Church relation is to be fostered may be gathered from the fact that the early Christians were much in each other's company and generally preceding the Lord's Supper met together for a friendly meal. The author of the book of Hebrews goes even further, saying: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." St. Paul told the Romans to be "given to hospitality," and while some of this would be to strangers, most of it would be to other holders of the Christian faith. It can be safely said that the whole trend of the New Testament is toward allowing our social nature to have full swing in our Church relations.

One may now go to the other side of the question and ask if it would do violence to our Christianity if we should be gracious and unselfish and cultivate social relationships with members of our own churches and with Christians generally. The answer of every sane reader must be an emphatic and unqualified "No, it would be the Christ-like thing to do." Few know how lonesome other lives are; not many in comfortable circumstances know the ache a thoughtless snub may cause a sensitive and lonely

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heart. If we salute our friends only, how are we better than publicans? They love those that love them. We are supposed to be on a higher plane. Will we live up to it?

Attention That Warms the Heart of Strangers.

The testimony of strangers or chance visitors to services in our churches is not often in praise of our cordiality. Confessing that the fault is partly the visitor's for not throwing himself on our necks, the fact remains that for a stranger to be allowed to enter and leave a church with only the decorous service of an usher, proclaims a lack at a point where improvement could be easily made.

The plan of having ushers who keep a careful watch over the congregation, noting the entrance and exact sitting place of everyone who is not a regular worshipper, is to be highly commended. His services may well be supplemented by a "key man," who has in charge, say, the three pews immediately in front of him. Into the hand of this watchful one the usher may slip a card, as he goes up or down the aisle, on which he notes that a stranger is in the second pew in front, third sitting to the right or left.

The "key man" will see that the stranger has hymn-book and Testament, and, when the service is over, will make it a point to grasp his hand, get his name and address if he seems willing to give them up, introduce him to one or two others and, if the

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visitor responds sufficiently to justify it, find out his Church relation and induce him to meet the pastor. It will often be a real service if the worker have a card or leaflet giving a few facts concerning auxiliaries and their time of meeting, the basic requirements for membership in the church and when new members will be again received. Such hospitality may be easily and inoffensively extended, and after such treatment the visitor will feel that he is really welcome and that he has friends there who will greet him with a smile when he next appears.

It should be ever kept in mind that the ultimate winning of men and women to the Christian life is vastly aided by social intercourse. Wholesome acquaintance generally precedes the confidence which gives an invitation to the Christian life drawing power. When the richness of Christian character is revealed by Church members in gracious intercourse with strangers and friends, those strangers and friends can be led to think seriously of becoming Christians themselves. Never forget that it is what the Christian *does* and not what he *says* that draws.

Human Contact the Secret of Influence.

From the above New Testament teachings and from reasonable deductions it may safely be said that, while it must never have first place, there should be a measure of social life in every congregation. The spirit of fellowship should be everywhere and all

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the time in evidence. Without it a church is cold and cheerless indeed. Without it the new member and the stranger feels that instead of being among warm-hearted Christians he has fallen in with a school of icebergs. With the spirit of fellowship abounding, every part of a service may be second rate and still the worshipper will feel fully repaid for his journey to the House of God.

Human contact! Therein lies the secret of influence and power. Let life touch life. If it be wholesome life it will have its wholesome influence and the Church of Jesus will gain friends innumerable.

Let the spirit of fellowship show itself in hospitality extended to all who worship at *your* church, whether they be members or strangers. There should be a good comfortable seat for the stranger who drops into a service, even if the member who pays for the seat has to stand. One of the few things for which a pastor may be ashamed of his people is when they refuse, or grudgingly give, a seat in their pew to some stranger who, directed by an usher or no, finds his way there. To make him feel that he is intruding, to make him sorry he came, to make him question the genuineness of the Christian profession, is to commit a well-nigh unpardonable fault. If, to carry out the Master's spirit, the inhabitants of the by-ways and hedges are to be compelled to come in that his house may be *full*, it can

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hardly be to the credit of the pew holder that he snubs a stranger when, without a stroke of work on the member's part, he, of his own desire, comes into the Father's house.

The Place of the Church Supper.

Three or four times a year every congregation should come together at the church for a purely social evening. At such times there should be no charge for entrance or any refreshments that may be served. Such may be provided by the Official Board as a sign of gratitude for the honor shown them, or by housewives, who are always glad to help the cause along. According to the judgment of this writer, refreshments in a church should never be elaborate. A cup of tea and a wafer, or coffee and sandwich; just enough to talk over. "If any be hungry, let them eat at home," is the injunction of the Apostle. Here the people have come to get better acquainted with each other, to entertain strangers and to hold that communion which should be much more common among saints than it is. Little food is necessary; just enough to suggest the social board. The introduction of music, readings, and, where there is a suitable room apart, games for the children, will more than make up for the lightness of the refreshments; and, because the money question is not prominent, will prove of infinitely greater value in advancing the spirit of fellowship. Furthermore, it

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will do much to develop and give confidence to young musicians and readers whose talents will be valuable to the church on other occasions. It will give opportunity for officers and pastor to speak those informal words concerning the life and work of the church which often have more to do with cementing the membership into an effectual working force than all things else.

If there *must* be “sociables” for money raising let them be as few and far between as possible and the fee as low. The all too common “Church fair,” which often is a bare-faced steal, wherein chances are sold on bed-quilts and hand-painted punch-bowls, and “the handsomest young lady” is discovered by the spendthrift tendencies of the biggest fool, must surely be an abomination unto the Lord, and they have no more right in a Christian Church than a roulette wheel. Gambling is gambling, for big stake or for little; whether the proceeds enrich a scoundrel or a Church. A good name is always sacrificed to such riches.

The Sabbath school, with its annual or semi-annual picnic; the Young People’s Society’s socials; the Men’s Club suppers, where, if there is a fee at all, it is small as compared with the service rendered, will furnish all the other opportunities for such gatherings needed, and any further social intercourse should be had in the homes of the people. Happy the congregation which, when building its church

home, found it possible to provide social rooms entirely apart from auditorium, Sabbath school or prayer meeting rooms. These may thus be kept for their sacred purposes and the young may never come to treat them as play-rooms. Let the House of God be, as absolutely as possible, a house of prayer.

Seek Out Hidden Virtues.

The more fully the spirit of fellowship can control the intercourse of Church members when away from the church, the more naturally it will be entered upon there and the greater its results. There ought to be, and, according to the Master's plan, there should be, a more intimate relationship between Christians than between Christians and non-Christians. "Ye are my disciples if ye love one another," said the Master. Having so many things in common; the same Master to love and serve, the same Father to worship, the same virtues to attain, the same Heaven to anticipate and work toward, Christians should find the association of Christians sweet indeed. Every man has hidden virtues, which reveal themselves only after long acquaintance or deep search. Christians may well seek for the virtues in each other and, finding them, make them known to the world.

We always love the man who insists that his wife, his boy, his house, his city is the best ever. They are to him. He is perfectly honest. The secret is, he has hunted out their virtues which others may not

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see, and which he does not see in others because he has not sought. It will be a happy day when Christians, having acknowledged the easily seen, and having searched out the hidden virtues of other Christians, shall call them best of all and shall proclaim their virtues wherever occasion shall allow. Then shall Christendom be a great Brotherhood and the ideal of Christ be realized.

VIII.

MUSIC IN THE SANCTUARY.

THAT music has a rightful place in the life of the modern church every worshipper will at once concede. Many lips that have never uttered a prayer have continually communed with God in song. Even though the song be without words, it may nevertheless breathe a prayer, for music has a substance all its own and has power to lift the soul of man up toward its God. Its wings may be invisible, but they are none the less powerful. Gossamer and gold, like the wings of fairies, the pinions of harmony waft the soul of man on high. To some chord of music every human life is attuned, and when the soul finds that chord it is:

“Like the sound of a great ‘Amen.’”

It expresses its hopes, its aspirations, its desires. It utters its gratitude, it is its song of profound thanksgiving. To many in a public service, if it be wisely chosen, the music will mean more than the Scripture lesson, more than the sermon even. With the tranquillity and soul satisfaction produced by right music

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many a life will go to its home lifted and revived, with the feeling welling up large and strong that it has been well to go into the house of the Lord.

If music holds such possibilities in its gentle embrace, what shall be said of the church or the minister who treats it as a secondary or subordinate part of the service? The minister who looks upon music as an intrusion, who gives it only scraps and fragments of time and thought, or, worse yet, leaves it entirely to some one else who knows nothing of the end he is trying to reach with Scripture lesson and sermon, is throwing aside the greatest contributing force at his command. Nothing is unimportant that may aid the preacher, even in the smallest degree, in reaching the hearts he is after and melting them into love for Jesus Christ. One song, breathing the sweetness and warmth of the Gospel story, will often do more to win indifferent hearts than all the brains and eloquence at the preacher's command. The minister who says, with that superior and self-gratulatory air not wholly uncommon in his class, that "he keeps his hands off of the music" is hardly entitled to the glory he thus takes. It is rather a confession of inability, or unwillingness, to cope with a problem that is difficult, to be sure, but, when wisely handled, is capable of yielding immeasurable contributions to the very thing he should be striving to accomplish.

In the average modern church the music will be of three kinds: Instrumental, such as Prelude, Offer-

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tory and Postlude; congregational singing, in which hymns and chants will predominate, and choir music. In reference to the first of these, one is moved to speak extravagantly of the modern pipe-organ. Surely no nobler instrument was ever conceived, or one capable of producing a more definite and helpful effect on man. If, this moment, it speaks in tones of thunder, reminding one of Mount Sinai, the next it may whisper with voice as gentle as angels, wooing man away from the world into the quiet atmosphere of heaven.

The Minister Should Control His Service.

Difficult as it may be to manage, the minister must see to it that, during his preaching services at least, the organ is not used to display the extraordinary skill and musical ability of the organist. The temptation is great, and few will withstand it unless the minister, who must carry the responsibility for the general effect of the whole service, reveals a strong hand. He will not do this offensively. Let him take the organist into his confidence, letting him know exactly what he is trying to accomplish by the music, and any worthy musician will at once co-operate.

The minister has every right to insist that the Organ Prelude lead the people into the service; that it produce a worshipful and reverential spirit, and that, far from being distracting or calling attention

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to itself, it shall merge in with the service in hand until the people are unconsciously prepared for Scripture and sermon. That this effect may be produced the people must do their part. To use the time during the Organ Prelude for neighborhood gossip or the interchange of social felicities is not only an offense against the organist; it is a graver offense against the house of God and the service which is to follow. If worshippers do not enjoy sacred instrumental music, it reveals a lack which is far from praiseworthy. They might better give this time to the cultivation of the taste they should possess. Important as the social life of a church is, it must not be furthered at the expense of the spiritual life, a thing which, apparently, many very worthy Christians have yet to learn.

If an Offertory is played, as often as possible it should be a variation on some well-known and beloved hymn. The audience will follow the tune with the words and be further prepared for the message that is to follow. When, in the heart of the service, the mind follows the rich tones of the organ with

“Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast,
But sweeter far Thy face to see
And in Thy presence rest.”

or

“Sweet the moments rich in blessing,
Which before Thy throne I spend.”

the heart of all true worshippers is ready and will

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instantly respond to whatever phase of the Gospel story the preacher persuasively proclaims.

While many organists seem to think so, the Postlude is not introduced at the close of a service for the purpose of clearing the church in the shortest possible time. On one or two visits to modern city churches when, before the Amen of the Benediction had ceased reverberating, the quick-step march of the organist has crashed on the ear like the clanging cymbals of a railway dinner call, the writer has involuntarily looked for the sexton to rush out and begin to sprinkle sawdust and sweep as fast as the people withdraw toward the door!

Valuable as time is, it would hardly seem necessary to do this or for the people to shuffle into rubbers and wraps during the singing of the last hymn or the pronouncing of the Benediction. It is all a part of the unpardonable haste with which we have come to do things in the house of God, and we are paying for it dearly in lack of reverence for sacred things and the manners of which civilization is wont to boast.

The very best plan yet entered upon is for the audience to remain seated during the singing of the last hymn, and then, with bowed heads, receive the Benediction. The people remain in silent prayer for a moment while the organist begins his Postlude with quiet strains, which may grow louder as the people rise and move reverently toward the door.

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Handled thus the instrumental music will do its share toward an effectual and up-lifting service and not be a hindrance to be overcome, a nightmare to be forgotten before any value can be had from the service.

Let the People Sing.

Next in order come the hymns to be sung by the whole congregation. Originally these supplied all the music there was in a religious service, and it will be so yet in many churches. It is the privilege of the minister to know the contents of every hymn in the book used by his congregation, and, if he be musical, to know the tunes also. An occasional hour with his organist, going over new hymns, will prove most valuable.

We hear much in our day about the selection of hymns that "fit" the sermon. To be sure, yet there is room here for much wise caution. That minister is hardly tactful who selects hymns that allow the people to sing the main thoughts of his sermon before he preaches them! The hymn following the sermon may well bear directly upon the theme; the ones before, while doing their share to prepare the people for the coming message, should never speak it.

For example, when a man is about to preach a patriotic sermon, in which he means to touch upon the country's foes, to urge peace, to mention the

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crops gathered and growing, it would hardly seem a stroke of genius to have the freshness all taken off of his theme by having the people sing immediately before the sermon the hymn including the stanza:

“O guard our shores from every foe,
With peace our borders bless;
With prosperous times our cities crown,
Our fields with plenteousness.”

Excellent after the sermon; such a hymn has no place before. If one were going to preach on the Holy Spirit, a hymn in which His gracious work and leading characteristics are detailed had better come after the sermon. How faulty the method therefore of leaving this all to some one else who knows nothing about the theme to be discussed or to one who does, but does not have these really important elements in mind.

When Dr. Henry Van Dyke left the Brick Church in New York a few years ago one good woman was heard to remark that the chief thing she feared was that they could never get another man who knew the value of the right hymns and who could make them contribute so much to the services. Imagine her relief when the successor turned out to be Maltbie Babcock, whose sense of the fitness of things in music was proverbial throughout the Church.

The moment a minister knows what themes he is going to preach upon the following Sabbath, which

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every wise man will settle by Tuesday or Wednesday in ordinary cases, he may well begin to think about the hymns he will use in each service; does he wish minds quieted, or does he wish them aroused? Would he have them thinking of God the Father, Christ the Son, or the Holy Comforter? Let the hymns contribute their large share.

The subject of congregational singing is forever alive. Whatever a church has by way of a choir, some good singer should act as precentor on the hymns. It will add vastly to the general effectiveness of a hymn if choir and congregation be singing somewhere on the same staff at the same time! It seems surprising also that people who are so eager to get away when the service is over should prolong the service as they do by singing all the hymns to the time of Old Hundred! It might not be a bad custom for publishers to print at the head of every hymn: "Accelerato! Sing this hymn a half faster than you intended to." Even then the precentor would have his place, and in addition to indicating the time, would do his share toward keeping the various sections of the house in a more or less intimate relation with the leaders.

The greatest problem of all is, by common consent, to get the people to sing—all of them, on every hymn, as if they really meant the words they were uttering—meant to worship God with the voice and with instruments of music. Few churches in Chris-

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tendom equal Saint Georges Free Church in Edinburgh in the effectiveness of their music. Here the large choir is seated on a platform directly in front of the pulpit and nearly in the heart of the large congregation. The platform is raised only sixteen or eighteen inches above the floor of the auditorium, and thus the whole congregation hears and feels the force of the leaders. Every worshipper is supplied with a hymn-book, a provision in which the average American church is sadly lacking, the opinion apparently prevailing here that one book to every three or four worshippers is quite enough. If one should judge from the volume and enthusiasm marking the congregational singing in Saint Georges, it would seem to be a point of honor for everybody to sing. Even the selection rendered by the choir alone was in the book in the pews and the whole congregation followed the words while the choir sang. Thus that particular part of the service was intelligible and not the baffling mystery common with us.

Choir Music: To Be or Not To Be?

How much the average anthem by the average choir contributes to the worship of the average church service, is becoming more and more a matter of question. Many are admitting a measure of gratitude when they find a congregation here and there that has omitted it. As a space-filler it has considerable value. One remembers having been cut

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down to twelve minutes for the sermon by a choir that interjected three long selections in one morning service! As a revealer of voices and voice culture, or at times, the lack of it, the anthem may also be lauded. If it be not introduced for these purposes but as a contribution to the service, then it is a fair question whether it should not be omitted. The words are seldom understood by the audience and few singers are so filled with the Spirit as to be able to lift the people without them.

More and more are the people inclining toward Gospel solos and duets, sung by sweet young voices not too much "improved" by the ordinary culture. Such a song warms and lifts the heart, preparing one for the message that must evermore be the great thing in a life-stirring service. Let it be a simple, not an ambitious effort and the people will be comfortable and grateful. All this is said without the slightest reflection upon, or undervaluing of, genuine musical culture in either organist or choir singers, to whose ministrations the author is deeply indebted. The above criticisms and suggestions will apply chiefly to churches in rural communities, where the too ambitious efforts of untrained musicians often mar rather than beautify a service. Let the effort be suited to the culture and all will be well.

The principle that must underlie Church music, as well as everything else introduced, is that it shall contribute to the effectiveness of the service in lift-

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ing the people nearer to God. Music that does not do this, however perfect it may be in itself, has no place in a religious meeting. Let it be enjoyed in its own time and place, which this lover of music believes to be large, but let the music introduced into Church services be simple, quiet and reverential, doing its full share in making the people glad when it is said unto them,

“Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

**AUXILIARIES AS FIELDS OF LABOR AND
RECRUITING STATIONS.**

AUXILIARIES.—THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

IX.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

THE Sabbath School has not only demonstrated its right to be; it has proven itself the most valuable auxiliary of the Church. The day for treating the Sabbath School enthusiast with an indulgent smile has passed; the day for seeking him out and pressing him into service is here. Ministers and laymen are realizing as never before that this auxiliary is not only the training ground for Christian soldiers, but that it is also the best recruiting station. Here congregate the crude materials out of which saints are made. They come by hundreds, by thousands; they may give little promise of perfection when first they enter, but the grace of God is sovereign, and when this plastic clay has been treated by the skilful hands of chosen workmen, when the help of the Spirit has been invoked and received, when the all-powerful Word has been applied and reapplied a score of times, out of the most unpromising material there emerge lives that enrich all Christendom and cause rejoicing in heaven.

It is the purpose of this chapter, therefore, not to present methods of conducting, so much as to

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lay emphasis upon the need of fostering and promoting the Sabbath School. Splendid methods have been prepared by able writers of vastly wider experience, but it is the profound conviction of modern observers that not one in ten of our pastors and Church officers has ever awakened to the possibilities of the Sabbath School as a factor in building a working church.

The Practice and Experience of One Pastor.

Concrete examples surpass theory as the sunlight the candle. The following experiences will, therefore, carry their own appeal for adoption. During a ministry of some twelve years, covering four pastorates in widely varying communities, it has been the practice of the writer to conduct, always once and sometimes twice a year, a catechumen, or Pastor's Instruction Class, in connection with the Sabbath School. He has tried every conceivable time and plan, but has concluded that, all things considered, it is best to start the class about seven weeks before a communion service, and to teach it during the usual study period of Sabbath School. The plan is to have the scholars meet with their regular classes as usual, and there report to their regular teacher, attendance, lesson study and offering. To go to the pastor in his study, or other place appointed, for the study period only, returning to the class for the closing exercises.

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It is announced clearly that the purpose of the class is to teach its members the fundamentals of the Christian faith and to prepare those who desire it for Church membership. It is made clear also that coming into the class is not a pledge to unite with the Church, but is simply an expression of willingness to learn more about its requirements and privileges. It is made plain that when the six lessons are over an opportunity to unite with the Church will be extended to all, but that no pressure will be brought to bear; that each one will come or not as he himself shall choose. When the starting of the class follows Decision Day, and this is highly recommended, a special effort to get every member making the decision into the class should be made.

The topics treated in the six lessons will vary according to the denomination and inclination of the pastor, but certainly they should include the following: God, studying Him as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Sin, its Punishment and its Forgiveness; Salvation, and How it is Secured Through Faith in Jesus Christ; The Church, a Human and a Divine Institution; The Duties and Privileges of Church Membership; The Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

No age limit has been put upon membership in the class, and, while it is primarily for those not yet Church members, these have not been excluded. The class had numbered from twenty-five to one hundred,

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and an average of seventy-five per cent. of the members have been welcomed into the Church at the Communion following. The opposition of one or two superintendents to taking scholars out of their regular classes for the six weeks has always vanished when he saw the immense benefit they have received. In a case or two, where a whole class has wished to follow the lessons, the teacher has met them at another hour during the week for the study of the International Lesson.

Applicants put through such a course of instruction have proven to be the best prepared of any who knocked at the Church doors, and the churches that have been creeping along with half a dozen accessions on profession a year have suddenly leaped up to half a hundred or more. Pastors may set this down as demonstrated: The larger the Sabbath School, the larger the Pastor's Instruction Class; the larger the Instruction Class, the larger the number uniting with the Church on Confession of Faith; and the larger the number so coming, the greater the life and efficiency of the Church. Therefore the pastor, ambitious to develop a working church, must give much more time and thought and work to making large and strong the Sabbath School.

Another equally fruitful source of the best Church membership is the gathering of little children, even members of the Cradle Roll, into the Sabbath School, as the first step in winning their parents to the

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Church. The ease with which this may be done has been proved too often to need argument. There can be no more legitimate method for building up a church. The children are gathered for their own sakes. Every possible effort to build them up in Christ Jesus is put forth by pastor and teacher. One child is worthy the best efforts of the whole Church force; but the fact that their child is receiving such attention and benefit will attract the most indifferent parents. It gives the tactful pastor sufficient reason for frequent calls. By and by the child will wish to unite with the Church. As naturally as he chooses friends from companions of long standing, he will choose the church whose Sabbath School he has attended, and the start is made. Seeing the child interested the parents will be glad, and if they have not other strong preference, will go with their child when they unite with the Church.

The Boy Who Brought a Family.

In a western city a young boy was gathered into her class by a faithful teacher. She had seen him on the streets Sabbath mornings, and knew he had no regular place. He was the son of well-to-do parents, who were neglecting the Church. The mother had joined another denomination in girlhood, but the father had never made a confession. There was another son, still younger, who soon followed his brother to the Sabbath School in question.

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After some two years of faithful attendance the older son asked his parents if he might unite with the Church. They felt it to be unnecessary, but offered no objection, and at the next communion the confession was made. The pastor then began to call at the boy's home and found the mother glad her son had taken the step he had. She then told the pastor of her fragile relation to another denomination, but said frankly: "Since Harold has joined your church, if I ever enter the Church again I will go with him." This gave the pastor his opportunity. He said he could not suggest that she change denominations, but he was profoundly convinced that it was the duty of parents, and especially of mothers of growing boys, to have a church home and lead their sons as deeply as possible into the religious life. She agreed with him, and said that if the husband and father would go she would unite at once.

To reach the father was not easy. He was a prosperous business man, absorbed by the gathering of a fortune. He had lodge and club memberships that quite satisfied the demands of his social nature. His spiritual nature had not yet been awakened. The pastor brought the case before his elders, asking their counsel and prayers. In the meantime the mother became more and more regular in Church attendance, and frequently reiterated her willingness to come into the Church as soon as her husband would accompany her. And now a strange thing happened: The hus-

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band was thrown upon his back with a severe illness. For weeks his life was despaired of. He was too ill to see anyone and the pastor could only pray in silence. Finally, during the man's slow convalescence, the minister ventured to send to the house a pamphlet treating in modern fashion the fundamental questions of the Christian faith. This the convalescent read and re-read many times. When at length he could receive visitors he asked for his son's pastor, made a clear and genuine confession of faith in the Saviour and the next communion was received, with his wife and younger son, into the Church, one of the happiest Christians in his state. So happy is he in his new relation to the Kingdom that, though a most sensitive man, his pastor is sure if his eyes ever fall upon this printed narrative of his experience, he will not be offended, but be glad in the hope that the story thus revealed will stimulate other pastors and teachers to more faithful work in winning and nurturing Sabbath School scholars whose winning may lead their families to the Saviour. This experience has been repeated with only slight variations a score of times in one pastor's ministry. It covered two years, but how the end justified the patient and persistent effort!

Methods That Have Proved Their Value.

One active pastor in the heart of Illinois added one hundred and seven new members to his church in a

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single year by working along the following lines: He went into each class in his flourishing Sabbath School and secured the names and addresses of all families whose children were in his school, but who were not members of his church. He was amazed to find how many there were. He began to call upon them. He found them most responsive to his invitation. Many of them had not come into the Church for want of this very invitation. They were ready and anxious to come. Others required but a small measure of urging. They came so readily he was both surprised and ashamed. He realized at last that while he had been mourning because of the small number that came into his church in response to his public appeals, he had allowed this rich mine to lie all unworked. It revealed a new world to him. His experience aroused others, until that one pastor's application of a new idea to a very old condition resulted in the gathering in of thousands. Here is a field well-nigh unworked by the average pastor. It is the point of least resistance and greatest promise in building up a large and aggressive church.

A similar idea of great fruitfulness is for the pastor to provide each teacher in his school with a blank form, preferably a card suitable for filing, on which the teacher will give him immediately the name and address of each new scholar entering his class. In addition to these bare facts, he will give as much more as possible. How many members in the family?

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Have they just come into the community? Are any of them, especially the parents, members of the Church? If so, of what Church? Would a call from the pastor probably be welcomed? If so, any particular time more convenient than another?

The pastor of a flourishing school will find from one to five of these cards coming in every week. The teacher had better deliver them direct, so that any personal word may be added. Live pastors will make it a point to call on these new families within a week. Dead ones will never know of their existence! Nothing is easier than to lead to full Church membership parents who are interested enough in their children to help them enter and attend a live Sabbath School. The pastor who does not do it proclaims his own inefficiency.

It will seem at once from the foregoing that the larger the school the larger the normal constituency of the church of which it is a part, and this leads one to urge upon all pastors and Church officers that they give much thought and time to building up the membership of their schools. I know the hue and cry about "no time" and "so many duties," but to neglect or refuse to help here is to turn from as fruitful a field as confronts a servant of the Master. It is like turning the back on diamonds to pick up rubies. Rubies are valuable, but less than half as much so as diamonds.

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A Thinking Head and Throbbing Heart.

Back of every school there should be a strong, aggressive, executive force that meets not less often than twice a month to plan for its growth and conduct. If an evening cannot be given to this, let the luncheon hour be chosen. Here will meet the pastor, the superintendent and his assistant, the superintendent of teachers, if he be different from one of these, the superintendents of departments, if the school be so modernized; not always the same, but at each meeting let one or two of the regular teachers also be present. Current gossip is barred when such a gathering is set. Let time and energy be given now to the matter in hand.

No outsider can give rules for the building up of a particular school, but such meetings of an executive head will quickly solve the problem. Experience has, however, revealed certain factors that are universal, without which no school need hope for large growth.

The first of these is that indefinable something which nobody can see, but all can instantly feel, and which may be called the spirit of the school. For this the superintendent is largely responsible. He must have the spirit himself and he must impart it to his assistants, his teachers, the leader of the music, and, in some part, to the scholars themselves. A large element in the creation of this subtle spirit

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is a genuine, genial, warm-hearted interest in every life that crosses the threshold of the school, whether it be young or old. No life can withstand the drawing power of genuine interest. Witness the young lad who walked from the distant suburbs, past a score of inviting doors, to attend the Sabbath School connected with Moody's Church, Chicago. Questioned by a policeman as to why he made the long walk when so many excellent schools were nearer, the lad replied, "*Because they love a fellow up there.*" Every school that has this spirit will be crowded to the doors.

A second vital element is the type and quality of teachers who gather and preside over the classes. In this the pastor may vastly aid the superintendent. Character and equipment are both vital in a really valuable teacher. A third and hardly less important element is genuine interest and a willingness to do the Lord's work necessary to gather and hold while one instructs and enriches a class. The busiest pastor can well afford to give an hour some late afternoon or early evening in each week to the instruction of a group of choice young men and women whom the superintendent plans to use as teachers. It is general, rather than particular, instruction they need. Let the pastor enlarge their vision, let them know the importance and value of personal work even on the most unpromising material; let him give them large glimpses of divine truth, revealing the

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Master's plan; then, after a few weeks of such instruction, let the superintendent give them small classes with the appeal to gather in more scholars and make them large ones. Such a process cannot fail to greatly raise both the attendance and standard of any school.

The appeal of Gospel music must not be neglected. Such a fruitful factor should no more be left to the chance of the moment than the teachers. The best musicians the congregation affords should be at the instruments. The piano or organ may well be supplemented by a few well-played horns and violins. A leader should arrange and direct the songs whose very presence is a stimulus and benediction. He should be a master in the art of getting every voice to sing; or, if they cannot sing, as one leader is wont to put it, let them make a noise *in harmony with those who do!* Three or four ringing songs with occasionally one or two voices to sing the verses alone will constitute a drawing power not to be disregarded. It will also develop the vocal ability of your future Church members.

An Occasional Membership Contest.

While it should be begun with caution and pursued with care, a special effort for the gathering in of new members should occasionally be entered upon. The custom of dividing the school into two groups: the Reds and the Blues, or the Boys and the

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Girls, has been found most practical. The reward, beyond the thanks and congratulations of pastor and officers for having done such excellent and important work for the Master, should be small; possibly the best is to have the whole school entertained at supper by the side bringing the fewest new members, with the winning side as Guests of Honor.

The difficulty is not in winning new scholars, but in holding them, without which, of course, the special effort is worse than valueless. To accomplish this will require all the skill and grace of teachers, superintendent and pastor. To quickly develop in the new scholar such a love for the Bible and the house of God, the religious service and the companionship of Christian people as to lead him to regular attendance, is a task to tax the ingenuity, patience and grace of the most favored workers. The secret lies in making the whole service attractive and in keeping the individual classes small enough so the teacher can give much personal attention to each recruit. Few drop out after half a year of attendance. The difficulty comes the first few weeks and months, and during the time no effort or time must be counted too great or precious to give to the cementing of the new relation.

Pastors, Church officers, Christians who are at all interested in the strengthening and building up of the Church, give more attention to the Sabbath School! Each new life brought in means greater

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power in the future Church; it often means, if rightly followed up, the immediate gathering in of parents, older brothers and sisters, and sometimes, friends and neighbors. The promise, "A little child shall lead them" is oftener fulfilled through the Sabbath School than anywhere else. It is the privilege of pastors and Church leaders to make its fulfilment a possibility in every non-Christian home. Interest in the child creates interest in the parent. Few fathers and mothers can stand out against the uttered or silent appeal of their children that they go with them into their Father's house.

X.

MEN'S CLUBS.

IN past years the Church has been shamefully guilty of allowing to lie dormant the forces that were nearest at hand and most powerful. The cry of over-organization has been sounding for the last half century; was loudest just before the beginning of Men's Clubs, the most powerful and promising of all religious organizations after the Church itself. Just as men hold the reigns of government and commerce, so they may and should hold the reigns in ecclesiastical affairs. With all possible appreciation of the good work women have done and will do, it should not be lost sight of that Christianity was delivered to men, and men were commanded to carry it into all the world.

The prominence of women in Church affairs arose undoubtedly from their greater spirituality and devotion, and their greater freedom to give time and thought to religion. Men are beginning to realize that they have lost more than they have gained by allowing the world to absorb them and are beginning, through the regular auxiliaries and new organizations, to come into their own. When the men of the

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Church are as fully organized and as hard at work as the women, the power of the Church will be quadrupled.

What Form Shall the Organization Take?

The most fruitful type of men's organization yet discovered is the Club or Brotherhood, especially when a Bible Class is at its heart. It does not seem to matter greatly what the form of organization is. Two things only seem essential, that it have the devotion to Bible study of the Presbyterian Brotherhood, the enthusiasm for personal work for men of the Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip. Of course, there will be more or less social and literary life, but without the two above mentioned, no organization of men in the Church will long retain even the semblance of life.

Methods That Win.

The only way to permanently interest men in a church organization is to be absolutely open and honest with them. Many a church has found to its sorrow that if its ultimate object is to win men to the Christian life, it is a grievous mistake to invite them to smokers and banquets, giving out the impression that the affair is purely social. If men who have accepted an invitation to a church banquet under the impression that it is a purely social affair find that your real and now undisguised purpose is

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to land them in your ecclesiastical creel, they will not rise to your next cast. The most successful men's organization in an Illinois church a few years ago put its purposes on every invitation card thus: First, to study the Bible; second, to win men to the Christian life; third, to promote the spirit of fellowship between all men.

Men love methods that are manly. One had as well try to catch tarpon with a gaudy trout fly as to "take alive" a really worthy man by deceit or subterfuge. A member worth having or who is benefited by his coming, is one who has considered the whole matter carefully, who has come knowing requirements as well as privileges and who finds that the Church is better than represented. There is no reason why the social privileges and benefits of Church membership should not be emphasized in our invitations to men to join with us; but let them be given their right place and relation. They are not first or second, but really very minor as compared with the spiritual benefits and privileges of genuine Christianity.

Press Forward the Bible Class.

As a recruiting station for strong men the Brotherhood Bible Class cannot be surpassed. A few years ago a pastor in a live county seat town in Illinois led his Brotherhood in the establishment of such a class which met in the county court room

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Sabbath afternoon at four o'clock. An average attendance of fifty men was maintained throughout the winter. They studied the International Lessons, which that year started with the creation narrative in Genesis. Two-thirds of the men were Church members; the others were young men about town, careless or indifferent men of middle age whose Christian friends persuaded them to try again to find in the Bible what they found there; some were very old men. Before six weeks had passed the pastor-teacher began to see that the Word was having its customary effect. Young men said: "I never understood this matter before," and old men confessed they had held erroneous ideas. Invitations to Church membership were given in due time and some of the strongest young men of the town came freely and gladly. The number coming was not great enough to cause surprise, but being the men they were did. The manhood of the town was stirred. When the cleansing symbol was administered and those young men took the vows of the Church, strong men used their handkerchiefs with unwonted violence, and tender women frankly wept for joy. Many of those thus coming are now leaders in the Church life of the town. The effect of that one Bible class will remain for generations.

The Sabbath Evening Attendance Problem Solved.

Splendid fruitage is often obtained also by utilizing the force of the Men's Organization in building

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up and maintaining attendance upon the Sabbath services from which new members come in the regular course of Church work. A church in the Western States had largely attended morning services, but the evening service was small. The pastor plead with his Brotherhood, then over one hundred strong, to put itself under the evening service and make it go. They agreed. A plan of coöperation was adopted. The pastor was to preach special sermons, each one of which, however, was to contain some phase of the Gospel message; the men were to attend, with their families and friends, together with every associate or acquaintance they could persuade to come with them. An abundant supply of Gospel song books was secured; a large Brotherhood chorus organized to supplement the regular choir.

Attendance jumped from two hundred to six hundred the first week, and was maintained at high tide all through the winter. Scores of lukewarm members were aroused, and by persistent personal work many new members were gathered. The pastor developed the habit in his men of bringing their unsaved friends down to meet him at the close of the service. He took their name and address; asked if they had a Church home; started an acquaintance which led to frank conversations and many regenerations.

Nothing stirs a congregation more than to see one or two hundred strong men at work; to see a

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chorus of twenty-five supplementing the choir; to see leading men usher and receive the offering. Nothing cheers them more than to see a Bible class for men attended by from fifty to three times that number; to see men fill a pew at the preaching service with young men friends. Men respond to the solicitation of men. If all male members would go to work, the churches would soon be full.

Recognize Man's Social Nature.

While, as is emphasized above, we believe the ultimate object of all such work should be kept frankly in the foreground, and men should be made to understand that you were working for their ultimate salvation, as an introduction to it all, social life may well be fostered. Intimate acquaintance usually precedes effectual personal work. Laymen will render their pastors and the Kingdom immeasurable service if they will take every opportunity to further acquaintance between the minister and the men in whose salvation they are deeply concerned. Even yet there prevails among business men the feeling that ministers are a very impractical, unsocial guild; that they do not and cannot understand the peculiar problems of a business man's life; that they are for use only on Sundays, at funerals and weddings.

Fortunately this is true of very few men now in the ministry. A few have not yet escaped the thrall of mediæval ecclesiastical absurdities, but the ma-

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jority have a right generous measure of common-sense. Many wise laymen are solving the problem by bringing minister and business friend together at the luncheon hour at down town club or restaurant. In smaller towns they meet at the laymen's board. When a few find out that the minister is a *man* before he is a minister, and a good fellow whose acquaintance is well worth having, the welcome news quickly spreads. The remark becomes common "on the curb" that the man at the North Street Church is all right; a gentleman and a man who believes in his work. While the new acquaintances are not ready to give immediate assent to his doctrines, they believe him sincere and begin to drop in at his services. Some day, by the grace of God, he lets go a shaft that finds their hearts. It holds there and rankles until they cry to God for mercy, and when the Holy Spirit heals their wounds they are saved men.

On a larger scale, social life may also be fostered by the Men's Club by concert, lecture or banquet; by picnic, athletics or Booster Club. Do not disguise your ultimate object, but neither should you untactfully press it on every chance coming together. A club of Christian men should stand for the best in everything they touch. If they assay athletics, let their conduct be clean and above reproach; if musical or literary programme, the highest standards of art should be maintained; if a banquet, the best food and the best service obtainable. If men find the highest

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grades of these things in their lodges and lower or indifferent grades in the churches, the latter will lose in the contest with the former so far as the social element is a factor.

There can be no question but that great good often flows from a rightly conducted men's banquet. We hear of one where some two hundred men sit down together every second month. Only three-fourths are Christian men, but they are rapidly making Christians out of the balance. Guests are placed at table with the tact and skill of a housewife. Strangers sit by men whose acquaintance and spirit will do them the most good. Service and cuisine are unsurpassed. Music often accompanies the meal. When it is over there are a few crisp, timely speeches, some of them telling of the work of the club and some breathing the Gospel message. The invitation to the Christian life is never pressed, but always implied. Without question many a start toward the Christian life is made in that banquet hall.

Solving the Financial Problem.

Another point at which the Men's Organization can do much, if not most, is solving the financial problem of their local church. Most churches have a financial problem because the men have never taken hold of Church finances in earnest. In their lodges and clubs they show master hands. They could do greater work here.

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As a primary element in the procedure there should be a campaign of education. Few congregations know what the real financial condition of their church is. Through long and shameful neglect, the idea is accepted as one of the seven facts of history: that a church must be poor and, most of the time, in debt. The smaller the pastor's salary the more probable is it that it is slowly paid. Because he is patient and gentle of speech, he is taken advantage of. Where he is anything else, he either gets his salary or hunts a new field.

Now by universal consent this is an unpardonable situation. Everybody rails at it and ends by saying: "But what can we do?" Well, the men could immediately change it if they would. The problem is not unsolvable. It requires mainly attention, but also business sagacity and persistent effort. After resolving to correct the unhappy condition, let your people know by personal conversation and by printed matter exactly what the situation is; church debt, current expense deficiency and everything else. Nothing is ever gained by withholding the facts from the people. They have a right to know.

When the situation is thoroughly understood, the solicitation done by the deacons or trustees may be supplemented by further and more complete solicitation on the part of a large committee from the men. No one need be given more than three or four families, and they should be ones with whom

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he is on the best of terms and has most influence.

The subscription and weekly contribution method should be urged for current expenses and benevolent offerings. Few families will contribute their fair proportion if compelled to pay it all at one time. The practice of regular contributions at public services should be everywhere encouraged. This puts the money in the treasury as it is needed and the pastor will not need to go about in the alleys to avoid irate creditors. When the men of the Church take hold of its finances with the same energy they show in their own business affairs, the perplexing and embarrassing problem will be solved.

In the Realm of Citizenship.

There are certain problems in social and political life in which the men of the Church must ever be vitally interested. While Church and State have no *legal* relation, being composed of the same men, they must ever have a very *practical* relation. Men of the Church can never be indifferent to the moral welfare of their communities. Whatever affects the manhood of their vicinities must receive their attention. Committees on Christian Citizenship will therefore be appointed. They will strive to prevent impure theatres and moving picture shows from alluring the young; they will fight against the open saloon and pool-room; against gambling and excessive indulgence of every kind. Oftentimes the determined

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protest of a few prominent men changes the policy of a whole city administration on such matters.

Two points on which the influence of men's clubs had been brought to bear with great force in recent years are Sabbath Observance and the Saturday Half Holiday. When office, store and shop employees are permitted to visit ball-game and park on Saturday afternoon, they can be much more easily persuaded not to visit them Sunday afternoon. The wearied human body cries out for the open, for "God's out of doors"; and should have it. Let the influence of all Christian men be on the side of opening the way for this during the week, and the privilege will not be long withheld. "You can have no conception of what that Saturday half holiday means to us," recently said a faithful glove-counter employee in a great Denver department store. "From eight o'clock until six every week-day in the year I never see anything but the faces before this counter and the gloves with which I work. Standing so long benumbs my whole body so that when the time comes to start home I can hardly walk. But since the store began giving us part of Saturday it is very different. We get out in the parks or in the mountains and see and breathe enough to help us all through the week. Then going to church on Sunday is a pleasure instead of a burden as it was before. It really makes life worth living."

The whole argument for the value of men's work

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in the Church may be summed up in the pregnant words of the Secretary of the Presbyterian National Brotherhood: "Men do whatever else they undertake, even to the cutting of continents asunder and the uniting of oceans that creation divorced. What will they not be able to do when they seriously assume their responsibility for the Christian conquest of the world?"

XI.

WOMEN'S SOCIETIES.

WHAT can a mere man say on the subject of Women's Societies in the Church? How unpardonable that he should lay his profane hands on a matter of such delicacy! How useless, too, for has not the last word on the subject been said by charming and efficient sisters who have a *right* to speak!

Granted all! This man at least will not attempt to tell capable and consecrated women either what they may or what they should do; they knew both before he was born. (Horrors, no! not the present generation; their grandmothers!) But does he dare assay a compliment?

What he started to say was that the Church owes more to the consecration and self-sacrificing service of her women than to any other earthly factor, not excepting the ministry. No labor has been too hard, no time or talent too precious, for Christian women to give to keeping churches open and the torch of divine truth aflame. Last at the cross and first at the open sepulchre, women have ever been the champions of Christ and the chief promoters of His King-

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dom. Without their zeal and consecration, the Church would not be half so far along in its conquest of the world.

Importance and Value of Women's Organizations.

Instead of attempting to tell Christian women how to organize or do their work, it is the purpose of this chapter to arouse pastors and Church officers to the value of women's societies and to point out a few ways in which their power may be used in making more efficient the Church.

As a preliminary suggestion therefore let it be said that every pastor should let the women of his congregation know that he is in the most thorough and absolute sympathy with them in all their efforts to advance the Master's Kingdom. This sympathy should be evidenced continually and in unmistakable ways. It will not be possible for him to attend all the meetings, even if it were desirable that he should. He can, however, attend occasionally; can be ready to counsel or advise when called upon, and, if the experience of one man has been at all normal, he will find that good suggestions from him will be warmly received and quickly acted upon. Many a pastor has found his Women's Societies not only his "right hand man," but his left also, and sometimes his head and his heart. Wise pastors therefore will give thought and time to the multiplying and strengthening of Women's Societies in their churches.

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A Case Demanding Courage and Tact.

The experience of one earnest man in a middle western State will have its value for others. He accepted the call of a good-sized church whose reports indicated a healthy condition. Arriving on the field he found the preaching services poorly attended; the spirit of fellowship hardly discoverable, and that few new members were being received from year to year.

Setting himself to the solution of the problem he first reached the conclusion that better preaching and pastoral work on his part were the elements needed. With an abandon of zeal and consecration he threw himself into his work, but at the end of an anxious year he saw no improvement. One expedient after another was tried, and while each gave momentary promise, as soon as the first flush of enthusiasm had worn away the situation sagged again and became more hopeless than before.

Very reluctantly the pastor was forced to the conclusion that the women's organization of the Church was at fault. Only when he could no longer doubt did he confess the facts to himself, and this is what he discovered: The society had been organized more than a quarter of a century before. Its constitution and general policy had been then adopted and had never been changed. The leaders now were charter members and all well-to-do. The annual membership fee was high and must be paid each year

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before the privileges of the society were extended. In addition, certain social requirements and further expenditures were demanded of every member. What the pastor found was that in spite of the perfection of this organization and its splendid work in furtherance of the Kingdom in general, it was a stumbling-block and rock of offence in the local church.

Many zealous women were kept out by the high dues and other expected expenditures; and many others who could well pay the money somehow felt they were not wanted. Every time they ventured a suggestion touching change of policy, they received a rebuke they did not soon forget. A kind of "let newcomers know their place" attitude prevented the new life from expressing itself. Receiving this kind of treatment in the Women's Society, new women did not offer themselves for a snub in the public services. The church got the name of being cold, and hence, while seemingly progressing, it was in reality standing still, trembling on the brink of retrogression.

Difficult as the situation seemed, the ingenious pastor found a way out without civil war. He suggested the organization of a new society *among women who had been in the Church less than five years*. There were no dues, and contributions were wholly voluntary. While the chief objects of the new society were Church Aid and Missions, much time and thought were given to social life and, espe-

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cially, to calling and the furtherance of acquaintance between the church and new residents. A new spirit was evident at once. A spirit of fellowship pervaded the services. New members multiplied. The old society was unbroken until God in His Providence took several of the oldest members home and the remainder united with the new society under its modern constitution.

Women the Social Force of the Church.

All this leads to the ready acknowledgment that women are the social force of the modern Church, and the sooner this is recognized and utilized the better for the kingdom. We are social creatures, and though we may loudly proclaim that our treatment at the hands of others can have no effect on our religion, we had as well confess that it does have everything to do with our Church life and the enjoyment we receive from public services. More complaint is heard against women than against men to-day for not extending the hospitality of the Church to visiting strangers. Men have awakened more quickly to their duty and privilege in this regard than women. Reception committees of men are large and frequently meet. Rarely indeed is there a woman among them.

If women cannot overcome timidity enough to welcome strangers in the Church, let them be the more zealous in calling upon all, whose addresses

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can be secured, at their homes. Here, after all, is woman's kingdom, and a genuine friendship formed here will reach over into the Church.

And let it be emphasized that it is not "Church calls" that are wanted. Nothing will do more to chill a new resident's enthusiasm over a delightful call than to learn at the first meeting of the Women's Society that she was one of thirty that were dashed off in an afternoon, and that she is ticketed and tagged for a similar call by an equally industrious committee two weeks hence. The admirable tact revealed by women in purely social affairs may, with infinite profit, be brought into play in Church affairs.

Genuine Interest the Needed Dynamo.

Genuine interest must prompt to neighborhood calls, or they had better not be made. Lack of genuine interest, however, will not excuse the indifferent from doing their duty. Our Master reminds us of the vast possibilities in every life and His desire that every living soul be brought into the Father's family. It is our privilege to see in every sinning man and woman material for a redeemed saint. If we lack genuine interest in strangers it would be a Christian virtue to cultivate it and, having it, strive with tact and persistence to win them to the Master and His Church.

A small and very judicious committee from the Women's Society may well secure, at frequent inter-

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vals, from the pastor, from a similar committee in the Men's Club, and from every other source available, a list of new families and individuals who have moved into the parish. When all the facts obtainable concerning a family have been secured, the committee is ready to slip an intelligent Card of Information into the hand of some near-by member, with the request that an early call be made and an invitation to the services of the church extended. If there are children not yet in Sabbath School, the privilege of calling or sending some one for them before the next session should be secured. Eyes should be sharp on Sundays following, and when the invited ones appear, they should be welcomed and persuaded to tarry and meet the pastor after the service, and such others as may be near. Such calling has real value. It brings large returns and may well be fostered and encouraged by every pastor.

Correctors of Error; Scatterers of Truth.

Many ministers are learning nowadays that Women's Societies are the best distributors of information in the world. And this is said without reference to the time-worn jest touching woman's loquacity. Successful pastors have discovered the value of the right understanding of Church doctrines, for example; the plans of the Church touching benevolences, requirement for Church membership and a hundred other things that have so large a part in

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ecclesiastical life. Not infrequently they ask the privilege of meeting the Society and explaining one of these things to them. After the brief explanation, questions are answered and the request made that the women tell what they have learned to their families or neighbors, who may not know, or have erroneous ideas. One pastor took this method for correcting the widespread impression that his Church believed in "infant damnation." The results were most gratifying, resulting in a better feeling toward the Church and many new members.

Woman as a Soul Winner.

But the highest work of all which a society of Christian women may enter upon is Personal Evangelism. It is a fine thing to contribute money to Home and Foreign Missions, that others may go and work for the conversion of souls; it is a finer thing to do the work yourself. Is it not tragic that many a good woman who has spent a lifetime in furthering Foreign Missions does not know positively that she ever led a single soul to Christ? One woman in the City of Brooklyn was seized with this thought a few months ago. It almost stifled her. She said to her heart: "I will not let another day pass without trying at least." That evening she invited an unsaved young girl to spend the night with her. Before they slept the visitor had given her heart to God. The next night another girl and

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the third another. At end of one week she knew she had helped seven women find the Saviour, and she felt that her life work had really begun.

No power on earth can be compared to that of consecrated Christian women in the work of saving souls. Their own life of purity and self-sacrifice; the genuineness of their faith; the persuasiveness of voice and spirit; their greater freedom in talking of religious things, all combine to make the greatest force in the world for winning the unsaved. Many have never realized their power and some are wont to deny that they have it. Let them begin to work in earnest and the truth will quickly be known.

A Notable Example.

When a mother sets herself earnestly to bring about the conversion of her growing children she gloriously succeeds. The mother of Phillips Brooks is a notable example. They were members of the Episcopal Church and her reverence for another human soul made her hesitate to enter its sacred precincts. As each son approached years of discretion she began to pray more and more earnestly that the Spirit of God would lead his heart to confess the Saviour. To the older sons already confirmed, or to the trusty pages of her personal journal, she would utter her heart's cry. With reference to the conversion of her son George, which did not come until he was twenty-three, and after he had

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enlisted as a soldier in the Civil War, which awful struggle was to claim his life, the biographer of Phillips says: "For many years she had prayed and agonized and waited for this event. She could not know happiness until it had been accomplished. She had availed herself of every appeal that she could bring to bear; for years she besought Phillips in her letters to use his influence, but all seemed in vain. She continued to hope, to pray, and to struggle, and when after long delay the consummation was attained, it threw into the shadow of the unimportant all other events and circumstances, even the sad parting when he embarked for the war. She could let him go with composure, for the one transcendent issue of life had been met; he had been reborn into the spiritual and had become the child of God."

A glimpse into this great mother-heart may be had from the pages of her journal in which she wrote:

"September 28, 1862, Sunday evening. What a happy, blessed day this has been to me! My dear George, for whom I have prayed and longed and agonized for so many years, has to-day confessed his Saviour in Trinity Church, at the age of twenty-three years, before he leaves for the war. My desires and prayers have been granted. My eyes have seen the blessed sight so ardently longed for. I want never to lose the vivid impression of that beautiful

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scene. . . . I will never cease throughout Eternity to praise Him for this last great mercy, and for all the wonderful works He has done in my family. Four of my dear children are now safe in His fold, and, oh, may the dear remaining ones be speedily brought in! And for this, and all this goodness, I will praise His blessed name forever and ever."

In the belief that the attitude of this mother toward the conversion of her children may help other mothers in determining what their attitude should be, one more entry from the precious journal is added:

"October 5, 1862, Sunday evening. 'Tis done, the great transaction's done. O happy day! I have had the infinite joy of taking the Holy Sacrament, side by side with my dearest George. God has at last in His own good time answered my prayers and accepted the offering of my child, which I have for so long laid on His altar, and I have been able to say to-day: Here, Lord, am I and the child thou hast given me. How great and good God is to answer my prayers so wonderfully, and to make the poor dead heart of my child to seek his blessed Saviour! This blessing shall never grow old. It shall always be fresh as on this blessed day, and I will never forget to praise Him for it. I will begin now to sing my eternal song of praise on earth that I hope to sing with all my dear chil-

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dren, and the heavenly choir, before the throne throughout eternity.

“And now I will commit him to the care of his Covenant God, who will never forsake His child who has fled to Him in time of danger. May he ever be near him, shield him in the day of battle, surround him with His blessing, and bring him safe through every danger, to his dear home and anxious friends again. And the praise shall be His forever. But if he fall in battle or die e’er my eyes behold him again, oh, may his Saviour grant him an abundant entrance into His heavenly kingdom, to dwell with Him in glory forever. Heavenly Father, wilt Thou grant a mother’s prayer for Thy dear Son’s sake? Amen.”

Do not all readily confess that if pastors could develop such a longing in the heart of all mothers for the conversion of their own children, the race would be quickly won to God? No woman could feel so toward her own and not have much the same longing toward other children, toward every unsaved friend and neighbor. One is much interested in seeing in the annual reports of Women’s Societies, so many dollars given to Foreign Missions, so many to Home Missions, so many socials held, so many calls made. Would it not be *great*, stirring the heart to its depths, if it would also include, “so many souls won to Christ by personal work”? It will be so when such societies reach the ideal.

XII.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES.

STATISTICS of the most reliable nature reveal that fully seventy-five per cent. of present day Christians made the confession of Christ and came into the Church between the ages of twelve and eighteen years. The information should assist pastors in deciding on the field of greatest promise and the one in which their greatest force should be spent.

To say that youth is the impressionable age is to state but half a truth. Youth is impressionable, but it is also quick to perceive truth, merciless in its rejection of error, responsive to everything that is great, noble, inspiring. Not even yet is the Church giving youth the place to which it is entitled, and she has not begun to utilize its power.

The Church's Need of Youth.

One ventures to assert that no one thing is needed by the Church of to-day more than the strength, hope, courage, and willingness to labor and endure of her young people. Youth is venturesome; age is cautious and calculating. These very virtues keep

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many churches at a standstill, whereas the enthusiasm and daring spirit of youth would drive them forward. Better make a few mistakes in an honest effort to redeem the world than to sit still in lifeless, fruitless perfection. Michael Angelo's statue of Moses has never made a mistake, nor has it ever rendered the world a service. The living Hebrew erred constantly, but he led a nation out of bondage and lifted every member nearer God.

A little wholesome daring for God is the one thing lacking in many a worthy but lifeless church. It would come if youth were given a freer hand, or, better, if it were encouraged to come forward and take its rightful place. One thoroughly agrees with that master of logic and physiology who said: "Young men are the backbone of the Church. What we need to do is, Develop that backbone *and bring it to the front.*"

Of all classes to whom a minister speaks, he finds young people the most responsive. If a speaker holds them, he need not fear for the rest of his audience. One who has had many university students in his audience declares that they are a perfect thermometer on the question of the interesting quality and value of the matter he is delivering. Let him do anything well and they listen with ears, heart and soul. Let him do poorly and they instantly show their disapproval in no uncertain way.

They are prodigious workers. Not being cum-

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bered with the world's cares, both their hands and their heads are free. Dr. F. B. Meyer bears witness that one of the hardest tasks he ever encountered was to find enough work to keep going a Pastor's Aid Committee appointed by one of his Endeavor Societies. They literally clambered at his door for work!

Youth the Age of Greatest Activity.

A rather startling phrase was overheard recently on the streets of one of our great cities. Two mature business men were talking. One of them raised his voice to say: "When a man has reached thirty-five he is a has-been. He won't dig any more." This out-Osler Osler! Is the time coming when we will do our best work in our cribs? The serious part of it all is that the world's work is being largely done to-day by young people, and the Church may well give them harder tasks. Let children carry flowers and messages; give young men and women some good hard work to do.

Effective Personal Evangelists.

Pastors who have not tried it will find that they make the very best personal workers. Not to work among older folks perhaps, although here they will bear much fruit, but among those of their own age and among younger children. Their own innocence and purity make a strong appeal. If they have not

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fought and won many battles, their reputations are free from scars and those sought cannot rebuke them on the ground that the sinner is living about as pure a life as the saint.

Much is gained by gathering young people of fifteen or sixteen and older into a Personal Workers' Class. The pastor will be the instructor if he is alive to his opportunity. Time? *Take* the time just as you do to sleep and breathe. Such books as H. Clay Trumbull's Individual Work for Individuals or his son's abridgment of it, or Howard Agnew Johnston's Studies for Personal Workers, mentioned in an earlier chapter, will be found of immense value. They not only give methods, they give examples, which are of infinitely greater value. While the studying is being done the class should meet as often as every fortnight. In addition to methods and examples it will be the privilege of the pastor to implant a love for human souls, a sense of their value and preciousness in the sight of God and the idea of utilizing every opportunity which presents itself or can be worked up to tactfully present the claims of the Gospel.

After six or eight lessons the members of the class will begin to feel their new power. Let pastors remember it is quite as important to generate a love for personal work as it is to teach a young Christian how to do it. This is where the minister must come in strong.

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From numerous glorious experiences one pastor is convinced that, if rightly trained, young Christians will get their keenest joy from soul winning. He remembers encountering a young business man a few years ago who stopped him on the street to say: "That young Matson of your church is a marvel. I met him just a moment ago. His face was beaming and his eyes sparkling. He looked like I think I should had I just made ten thousand dollars. 'Matson,' I said, 'you look happy.' With glowing countenance he replied: 'I should say I am happy. I haven't felt so jubilant for months. You know Sam Andrews, lives out by the Base Line School House? Well, I have just been out to see him, and Sam and his wife, his daughter and two boys have agreed to come into our church next Sunday morning. Ain't that great? Once get Sam started, we'll win that whole community. I'm going after Nick Johnson to-morrow. Don't you want to go along?'" It is a pleasure to that young man's pastor to testify that his enthusiasm and love for souls did more than any other one thing to cheer him up and keep his heart warm during a pastorate of eight years.

The Glory of Consecrated Youth.

Some twelve years ago, in the City of Chicago, a young man became prominent in Christian Endeavor

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work. At first president of his local society only, he was soon at the head of a large district. He was not better educated than other young men, had no special advantages from birth or relationships, but the Christian forces of Chicago were quick to perceive that here was a new force, and they pushed him more and more rapidly to the front. When after five or six years of glorious Christian service a sudden illness ended his earthly labors, the whole city was in mourning, and even to-day the name of Frank White is revered in hundreds of homes made happier by his service.

The secret of his great life and marvellous success may be gathered from a remark he made to the writer concerning Christian Endeavor, shortly before his death: "Black, this is the greatest work in the world! To lead young people to the Saviour; to see them awaken to His greatness and power; to watch them consecrate themselves to Him; to snatch them from Satan's arms and give them back to Christ! I hurry through my work every day that I may give the long evenings to some troubled soul or struggling society. I would not take ten thousand dollars a year for my right to work for Jesus."

Wrong Standards Need Correcting.

Every pastor should put into the hands of his young people, both boys and girls, that marvellous book of Robert E. Speer's, "Young Men Who Over-

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came." Here are given the life stories of a dozen or fifteen young men that will stir the most sluggish blood. They make Christian service heroic and put to shame the vanity and false pride of the average youth. No greater service could be rendered the young manhood and womanhood of any city than for the Christian young people of the Church to correct certain false ideas. At present the notion prevails that the highest achievement for youth is to be swell, dead game, bizarre. Young men must smoke, bet, swear, and, above all things, never appear without a half dozen reefs in their trouser legs. Young women must build out their hair to three times its normal size; wear much jewelry; go with arms bare, no matter how ugly they may be, and wear very high-heeled, Frenchy shoes.

"Mabel," said an anxious mother recently to one of these modern Venuses, "you must wear your rubbers this morning. You know you are not well and the walks are very wet." "Mamma Smith," replied the irresistible, "you darling old silly, do you think I am going to make myself a *fright*? The girls would simply *die* laughing. Rubbers are for the mud-sills from the Way-back. . . . Well, suppose I do get pneumonia, that would be rather romantic. *Everybody* would be talking about me. . . . I don't care, I'd *rather* die than be laughed at all day by girls who know how to dress."

A young man in the Middle West, whose noble

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father had died when his boy was scarcely ten years old, left school at seventeen and, taking a position as collector for a mercantile establishment, started in to help his mother rear and educate the rest of the family. He had united with the Church at twelve and for many years had been regular at Sabbath School and dutiful to his widowed mother. Coming in contact with the working young men of the city he soon grew to despise his old way of life. How slow and pokey it had all been! His first move was to visit the pool-rooms, where a jolly lot of fellows congregated nightly. At first he blushed at the lewd stories current there, and the sneer at things he had always revered, but that soon passed. He began to play a little; had to, of course, or be considered a Rube. Then he began to bet a little, just enough to make the game interesting. Taking his salary check with him one week-end, he staked it all on a game and lost. That night he told his mother he had not been paid; his first black lie. But they came easy after that. When his mother noticed he did not have the gold watch his dying father had given him, he said he had lost it while playing ball. When other pieces of jewelry disappeared, he said they had been stolen.

One Saturday night he came home saying he was not well and had been given a two weeks' lay-off. Questioned about his salary, he said he had used it all paying for some new clothes. Sunday morning a

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deputy sheriff called with a warrant for the boy. He was fifty dollars short in his accounts. It developed also that instead of a two weeks' lay-off he had been discharged in disgrace. His trial brought out the facts. On a small salary he had tried to enter "high life," thinking that only thus could he take a place among men. The pool-room had robbed him of money, jewelry and even clothes. One night he had bought whisky of a prominent saloon keeper. When a Vigilance Committee had the liquor dealer arrested for selling to a minor, the misguided youth confessed that he had bought, but to hush the matter up and save his position agreed to pay the law-breaker's fine. Not having the money, he had stolen from his employers, though of course he was soon going to pay it back. And so from a position of respectability and honor, the young man had gone down step by step while all the time he thought he was winning an enviable place among men.

If the young people of our Churches would take it upon themselves to correct these false standards, to prove by word and by example that the only things that will give a youth a place either in society or the business world are truth, sobriety, industry and kindness; that nobility of character goes farther than cigarettes or false hair, they would render a real service to the kingdom.

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The Willing Pastor's Opportunity.

These instances will reveal to the willing pastor that the more he can give himself to his young people the better. He need not spend precious time educating their heads; the world and the schools will take care of that; but he does need to help educate their hearts both for right living and for Christian work. A youth in whose heart is a love for humanity and a craving to see men saved will not follow the false ideals of modern society. When the heart is full of love for Christ and His lost ones, it cannot be full of selfishness and love of evil.

Societies of young people in the Church may be made, first of all then, training grounds for Christian workers. The future leaders of the Church are here. They need to learn the Scriptures, to learn to take part gracefully and helpfully in public services; to learn the fine art of winningly extending the hospitality of the Church to visitors and strangers. But the society that goes no farther in training its workers will fall far short of the ideal. In the following paragraphs additional fields are indicated.

In the young people's societies our boys and girls should be taught the importance of supporting the local church both by attendance and by contribution. A danger from auxiliaries is that they take the place of the Church. Attendance upon their meetings is held by many to discharge one's religious

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duty. One pastor overcame this by getting his society interested in the question of attendance at the Sabbath evening service. He threw the responsibility of a good audience on them. He emphasized the influence they had on others. He asked them to organize a supplemental choir of twenty-five to fifty voices to help lead the Gospel singing. The young men did the ushering and received the offering. The young ladies helped in making every worshipper feel at home. Their church soon became known as The Young People's Church, and its success was prodigious. Tied thus to the welfare of the parent organization while in the young people's society, these workers moved out to other religious work as naturally as a bud becomes a rose. The future of the church was secure.

Men with a vision of world-wide redemption will not neglect to train their young people in the grace of giving to Missions and developing in their hearts a great, soul-engulfing love for the unsaved world. From young people must come our missionary recruits, and without patient and careful instruction our boys and girls will not know enough about the great non-Christian world to feel drawn to it or to consecrate themselves to its christianization. The time is not far away when the pastor who does not have a number of missionary volunteers and students for the ministry will feel that his ministry is failing. On the fidelity of the pastor in instructing and train-

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ing depends in large measure the number of workers who volunteer from his field.

But, most of all, emphasis will be laid upon Personal Evangelism, and every effort will be made to develop youth and maiden alike into personal workers. If the eight or ten million young Christians of America could be made soul winners, the redemption of the world would be quickly accomplished. What is being done already indicates what glorious things can be done when all are thoroughly awakened. No better conclusion to this chapter could be written than the inspiring poem written by Amos R. Wells on the twenty-ninth birthday of Christian Endeavor, the parent, and one of the largest branches of the young people's movement.

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR VINE.

"The marvel of the world of thought, of matter and of deed,
All promises and potencies lie hidden in a seed.
And this of ours, in wintry soil laid prayerfully away,
How has it grown and spread abroad since that fair-omened
day!

How deep its roots have pierced the ground, how far its tendrils run,
How broad the shadow of its leaves beneath the circling sun!
To north and south, to east and west, the glorious vine extends,
Around the sweep of all the earth its gracious fruitage bends;
Till China feels its hopefulness, and India owns the spell,
And all the islands of the sea its gladsome praises tell,
And Europe's lordliest of lands, and Africa's distant plains,

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And where the tropic splendors glow or Arctic stillness reigns,
By all of Heaven's sunshine cheered, by all its nurture fed,
Wherever men have built their homes this noble vine has
spread.

The clusters of its glowing fruit are full and fair and free,
And hanging low where all the world may haply taste and see;
And some are prayers, some are words of helpful kindness,
And some are deeds of loving hearts that quicken, heal, and
bless.

For He who is the living Vine, whose life in all its veins
Was beating in the earlier days and yet in strength remains,
He planted it, He nourished it, and He will tend it still,
The flower of His perfect love, the fruitage of His will!"
From The Christian Endeavor World.

XIII.

OUTSIDE MISSIONS.

IT was not the thought of Jesus that any church would be contented to serve itself alone. He knew the hesitancy of the poor and needy to come, on their own initiative, into places of prominence; to mingle with those whose education and material circumstances enabled them to enjoy unusual advantages. By direct word as well as by parable he told his followers to go where the masses of the people were; "into the byways and hedges," and compel them to come in. It was a dominating principle with Him that the fortunate should share his good things with the unfortunate; that the strong should bear part of the burden of the weak.

The Church Must Go to the People.

This two-phased principle lies at the base of all city mission work; of all Sabbath School work in rural districts or wherever the local strength or spirit is not sufficient to keep the lamp of divine truth burning. No Christian dares to sit back and say: "If people want religious services, let them come to the church. We keep it lighted and heated,

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with a good preacher in the pulpit. That is all that should be asked of us."

The distressing truth is that the very people it is our business to save, the sinning and the unbelieving, do not want religious services. They prefer to be left alone, to spend the Sabbath day in pleasure and feasting; to acknowledge no responsibility to God; to live selfish, self-indulgent lives. The Master said of all these: "Go out and compel them to come in that my house may be full."

At the very outset therefore it must be said: Such Missions should be conducted for the benefits they yield the individuals and communities they reach. If all the individuals who have been led to Christ in Mission Sabbath Schools were brought together, the one hundred greatest buildings in the world could not hold them; if all the lives that have been enriched by Bible knowledge gained in Mission Schools could be counted, their number would astonish the Church; if all the churches that have grown out of such schools could be known, they would be found to number fully one-half of all that bless the globe.

Bread Cast upon the Water Returns.

Some fifteen years ago a Sabbath School was started in a rural community in Illinois by zealous workers from an active church, some seven miles away. The community had a bad name. Most of

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the families were indifferent to religion and the men they hired to assist them on the farms were drinking, carousing men. At first the school had a hard time. Few attended and those who did lacked reverence and respect. One winter, when the men were idle, the promoters of the Mission secured an able leader, and held a series of evangelistic services. That turned the tide. A dozen of the best families joined the church and the school began to flourish. Farm hands who would not give up their old ways were discharged; families that would not go into the church began to give up their farms. Christian men bought them. Before ten years had passed the character of the community, as well as its reputation, had completely changed; it was observed at length that unconverted men entering the community soon did one of two things: they either became Christians or they moved away.

But this splendid record does not complete the story. Soon the well-to-do farmers began to sell their places and move into the near-by town. Because of the reputation of the community, Christian men bought their farms, and because they were Christians they at once entered the city churches, and began to give them their power. The quality of their Christianity was superior to any the city churches possessed. Their faith was so simple and firm, their devotion so absolute, their interest in the welfare of others so genuine. The bread the city had cast upon

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the waters a dozen years before had now returned to it a hundredfold.

Progress in City Evangelism.

It is universally admitted by the well-informed, not only that the slums and many of the suburbs of great cities could have no Protestant services if Missions were not fostered, but that they would soon become intolerable as places of abode to respectable people. Miss Jane Addams and her able co-workers are rapidly transforming one of the worst sections of Chicago with Hull House and its ministrations, though her services are not religious. At Chicago Commons, Professor Graham Taylor is doing even a greater work, for while he relieves ignorance and distress, and builds good citizens, he also opens the gates of the heavenly city and leads men back to God.

For three years the writer labored in a Presbyterian Mission in the extreme southern part of Chicago, in the neighborhood of steel mills, ship-yards, coal docks and great grain elevators. Life there was hard. Everybody worked at the severest kind of physical labor. Wages were low, the cost of living constantly increasing. At that time there were no playgrounds or bathing places. The mills burned oil for fuel and the smell was nauseating. The air was never free from it. A cloud of smoke hung over that section of the city from year's end to year's

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end. Half the population were foreigners, who seemed perfectly contented to live in squalor and filth. The families of a few prosperous merchants and professional men were huddled together on the best street, but they could hardly escape the influence of their environment. Nothing was favorable to the highest life. There were no libraries, no art galleries, no lecture courses and comparatively few churches.

The amazing thing about it all was that the Presbyterian Mission, in common with several others of other denominations, was like the proverbial white lily at the mouth of the coal mine. Every Sunday morning there gathered a vast group of clean-faced, freshly-dressed children to study the Bible, and an equally attractive audience an hour later to enjoy the sermon. While there was little homogeneity, each individual or family standing well-nigh alone, the standard of Christian life was high, the Mission Church an object of deep interest and rare devotion.

Watching the community for ten years since his own work closed, the writer has rejoiced to see one after another of the young people of this Mission rise to positions of prominence and influence. Many are now the leading business and professional men of the district; several have taken high honors at the University of Chicago, and are now leading educators in high schools and colleges; others have gone high as teachers in the public schools of the

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city, while another is prominent in a great business college. Faithful women have kept the Mission alive and scores have been born from above at its various meetings. Discouraging as such work seems at times, the long vision reveals that it is valuable beyond computation and is doing its large part in winning a lost race back to God.

The Strength That Comes From Serving.

But apart from all of this, and even if such rare benefits did not accrue, wise observers are convinced that such Missions are worth all they cost for the returns they yield the promoting church as a training place for Christian workers. There is only one way to learn to do Christian work, and that is to do it; the harder the circumstances, the more rapid the returns.

A small group of Christian workers used to hold street meetings Sabbath afternoons on The Strand, a short street of saloons, pool-rooms and low boarding houses facing the entrance to the steel mills at South Chicago. We went in a wagon for convenience as well as for safety. Half a dozen good singers who were also personal workers always accompanied the speaker. We would stop at a promising point and begin to sing. Out from saloons and dens would burst a turbulent mass of humanity, men and women in various stages of intoxication or sobriety. Second

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story windows would quickly fill with heads. A few would join in the singing, which revealed that they had learned the songs in childhood. Noise and confusion continued until the leader began to speak, then all were respectful and silent. They acted as their own police force; self-appointed custodians frequently removing with considerable violence obstreperous youths who would not keep still. The talks were always brief and to the point. No call for oratory or rhetoric here. Some phase of the Gospel Story clearly and persuasively told. A warm, strongly pressed invitation to accept the Saviour's cleansing and forgiveness, and the service was over.

Whatever may have been the benefit of those meetings to those who heard them, their value to the men and women who conducted them can never be measured. Many of them learned for the first time the power of the Gospel over human lives, no matter how full of sin and shame. Not one meeting was held that did not issue in the coming out of from one to five of those sin-engulfed souls. Young women would come, with hot tears staining their soiled cheeks; young men, stirred by song or story to thoughts of home and innocence, would break down in the sight of all and, bewailing their condition, beg to be helped back to friends and respectability. Many would accept the invitation of the workers to attend their church services, and there make the confession. They were convinced of the

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truth of Christ's claim: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

These workers learned also how powerless to save souls everything but the atoning sacrifice of Christ is; stories of the beautiful life of the Christ-man fell on indifferent ears. "Life was not hard with him as it is with us." Appeals to come out and be a man by the exercise of their own will power were answered with looks of despair. Only when we said: "Stop trying in your own strength; cast yourself just as you are on Jesus; confess your sins; tell him you want to begin again, to start anew, and that you will make an honest effort," would bring any results. The most fruitful song of all was:

"Just as I am without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am and waiting not,
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

My Word Shall Not Return unto Me Void.

A third important thing these young Christians learned was that if you do personal work earnestly and unselfishly, there will always be results. The great lack in Christendom to-day is actual face-to-face work for Jesus. Thousands will say it must be

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done, and even pray that it may be done, to one who will really get out and do it. The thing that surprised them was the readiness with which sinning men and women yield to the Saviour when they are earnestly labored with. Few human beings in normal surroundings but will gladly escape from the quagmire of sin if some one, in whom they have confidence, will show them the way.

And so the place to lay the emphasis in Christian work was learned by those young Mission workers, not in Theological Seminary or Teacher Training Class, but in an honest effort to do a bit of practical work for the Master. The advice of the writer is that every church, whether in city, town or country, shall conduct one or more Missions and that, where circumstances of unusual nature do not forbid, as many of the young people of the church as possible be put to work in them. Out of these early efforts will grow the power to do large things for God in years of maturity.

Missions in Rural Communities.

As recruiting stations for new members, Missions conducted by town churches in farming communities will be found to yield larger results than Missions in cities. Here differences in circumstances, education and social customs will often make the Mission convert feel ill at ease in the Mother Church. They get greater benefit from services conducted in their

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own communities, but in rural communities adjoining smaller towns these conditions do not prevail. Farmers and their families in America are often better educated than townspeople. They are perfectly at home in the small town church.

Here is an appeal to every pastor in churches that are in towns surrounded by farming communities; start as many Sabbath Schools in farming sections where there are none, as you have workers to man. This may be only one, or it may be three or four. Not only will this develop your own workers, but it will give the Gospel to those who otherwise might never have it and almost immediately you will begin to gather in large numbers of farmer members who make the most reliable and altogether satisfactory Church men of any class in America.

The same results are not accomplished by merely visiting them in their homes, though this will do much. Many a small town church, struggling with the financial problem and lack of workers, would save its own life and solve its problem if it would begin to obey the Great Commission with reference to near-by regions. Judea and Samaria were to be evangelized as well as the uttermost parts of the earth, and the promise touching one is just as full as touching the other: "Lo, I am with you." Not when we sit idly by complaining, but when we "go" has the Saviour promised to be with us.

The Outside Mission has, again and again, proved

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to be the salvation of the parent Church. Conditions are often discouraging, but overcoming these often makes giants, and, after all, the harvests are glorious. The more men and women we can persuade to study the Bible and meet Christ face to face, the more wandering children will be brought back to the Father's house. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will thrust forth laborers and see to it that you yourself are among them.

**HOW FOUR NOTABLE CHARACTERS
FOUND THE SAVIOUR.**

XIV.

PETER; BROUGHT BY HIS BROTHER.

JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, means to be easily accessible to all men. He is at once the most open and ready of all men who have in any large way affected the course of the world's events. No armed guard stands before His door and no obscurity clouds His simple utterances. The great of earth may find Him, but not more easily than the small; the rich, but not more readily than the poor; the intellectual, but not more freely than the simple and childish-minded. It was of the Life He came to give men He spoke when he said: "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Notwithstanding this ready accessibility, men find the Saviour in widely different ways. Birth, environment, education, temperament, all have an influence and oftentimes, and particularly in our day, opportunity proves to be the largest factor.

Finding the Saviour is not like finding any other character or power. It has its distinctive differences. Its effect is so large and its consequences so far-

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reaching. If it were the simple coming into the presence of a great man, as, for example, the President of the United States, the procedure would be much the same in all cases. One would find out where he was at the moment; secure an introductory letter from some prominent friend who knew him; seek the home, present the letter and, in a moment, be face to face with the man you were seeking. The business for which the interview was sought being transacted, the incident would be closed, except for certain pleasant memories, or temporary effects on one's earthly life.

But coming to the Saviour is a far larger thing. It involves the whole man and, particularly, that part of him not involved in meeting the President, the soul, with its vast outreach and Eternal existence. Coming into His pure presence also will bring its own rebuke of sin, as a sinful man is rebuked in the presence of a pure and innocent maiden; it will involve a change in the whole course of life, if that life has been away from God, and it will mean, not the recognition of a brother man by the eye of flesh, but the acknowledgment and acceptance of the God-man by the eye and the heart of faith.

This thing of eternal consequences then, which must be passed through by each life that is saved for eternity, that will involve a different experience according to the circumstances and environment of each one coming, that must be achieved in an indi-

Peter

vidual way, may well be studied by us in a few concrete cases if, happily, we may find some general rules that will open the way to those who have not found Him and suggest ways of service to those who wish to win their unsaved friends.

The Beginning of Personal Work.

In this first study we are to consider the conversion of Peter, the Galilean fisherman; how did he find the Saviour? It is conceded by all that the conversion of this man meant more to the young Church than that of any other, save Saul of Tarsus. By sheer force of character he became the leader of the Apostles. There was no appointment to such an office; it was never even acknowledged during the life of Jesus, but, nevertheless, he bulks so large in the recognition of Christ by the world and the founding of the Church, that his leadership must be at once confessed.

Remember that before his remarkable meeting with the young Rabbi from Galilee, Peter had never been heard of. He was one of hundreds who gained a scanty living by netting the plentiful fish from the little inland sea that holds for a few hours, as if for a respite in its gentle embrace, the fresh waters of the turbulent River Jordan. He lived in a small and simple world.

Added to this he was quick-tempered, emotional, headstrong. He had allowed himself free speech as

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well as free action. From later evidence, it may be gathered that an oath was often on his lips. Like all such natures he loved to gratify the senses, and this led him into open and flagrant sin. How shall such a nature find the Saviour, the meek and lowly, the pure and sinless one? It is clear he will never seek Him out himself. Some outside force must lead him; some friend that loves him and knows his possibilities; some lover of Jesus who sees the impetuous fisherman, not as he is now, but transformed by the magic touch of the God-man.

It was right at this point that *personal work for souls* began. Peter had a brother. We do not know much about Andrew, but what we do know puts him at the head of the world's soul-winners. He was a native of Bethsaida, the half agricultural, half fisher village at the northeast corner of the Sea of Galilee. That he was religious by nature is evident from his following of John the Baptist. When this sturdy herald pointed out to his followers the Lamb of God, Andrew left John and followed Jesus. In a few days or weeks he had satisfied himself that the claims of the young Jew were well founded, that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. His first thought was of his emotional, quick-tempered brother. If he could only get him to Jesus, get his conscience awakened, get his active mind working in the right direction, get his hot heart in love with the Messiah, he knew there would be no limit to the good he

could do. We do not know how long he worked with him, what tactful means he employed, what persuasive appeals he made, what earnest prayers to God for guidance and power. John's record of the event is simple to the point of terseness: "One of the two which heard John (the Baptist) speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah which is, being interpreted, the Christ. *And he brought him to Jesus.*" (John 1: 40-42.)

The Rich Fruits of Personal Solicitation.

Peter found the Saviour by being brought to Him by another who loved them both. It was not in a revival meeting, not in a preaching service, not in the midst of excitement or excess of feeling, but in a quiet, personal conversation, perhaps under the shade trees on the banks of the Jordan, that Peter found his Lord. He probably never would have found Him but for the good offices of Andrew. He knew Andrew, had confidence in his integrity, knew he had no selfish motive in urging him to the step, felt sure that he had investigated carefully and knew what he was talking about. *Such men as Andrew can bring such men as Peter to the Saviour every time they try!*

Through the lapse of years this noble act of Andrew's speaks to the followers of Jesus in the

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twentieth century. There is a note of gentle rebuke in it: "Why have you not been bringing your relatives, your friends, your business or social acquaintances to Jesus all the years of your Christian life?" There is a note of entreaty in it: "Will you not begin now to bring them and keep it up till all are won?"

This act of Andrew's may be called *the keynote in God's scheme for man's redemption*. He does not expect to accomplish it without the personal touch. "Go ye therefore." Scores of individuals are doing personal work to win our loved ones to evil. Shall we hesitate another moment to do personal work to win them to the Saviour?

Examples That Stir the Blood.

An experience in the life of Dwight L. Moody, the thing in fact which swept him out of the business world into the work of the Christian ministry, is told in a note of autobiography. Since his own conversion he had done all he could to bring the unsaved within hearing of the Gospel, but, though he filled five pews in a Chicago church Sabbath after Sabbath with young men from the streets, and though he was conducting a Bible School every Sunday afternoon with an attendance of over one thousand, he never did any personal work to lead individuals to accept the Saviour.

One day a man came to the store in which Moody

worked, in great distress of body and mind. He was the teacher of a class of young girls in Moody's Sunday School, and had just been told by a physician that he had but a few weeks to live. He must leave the raw winds of Lake Michigan and go back east where milder elements would probably enable him to live long enough to get his business affairs straightened up. He was resigned to his own lot, but he came to tell Mr. Moody that the one thing he could not stand was the thought of leaving that class of young girls without having led one of them to the Saviour.

Mr. Moody suggested that he get a carriage and go to see them that very afternoon. He would go with him. They would see if the girls could not yet be won. With the marks of coming death already on the sick man's features, they went that very day from house to house. The eager teacher told each girl of the burden on his heart. Then he would pray that God would win the hearts of his scholars to Himself. One after another they yielded, and before ten days were passed, the whole class was in the fold. Mr. Moody called them all together for a prayer-meeting. The teacher read the Fourteenth Chapter of St. John, and with broken voices they sang "Blest Be the Tie that Binds Our Hearts in Christian Love." They knelt to pray. The teacher carried every ransomed heart to the throne of God, and before they rose every girl had prayed for her

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teacher. As he went from that informal prayer-meeting, the prayer of Mr. Moody's heart was: "Oh, God, let me die rather than lose the blessing I have received to-night."

For the first time he had seen the possibilities and power of personal work for Christ. Before this his absorbing ambition had been to be a successful business man; now the passion of his heart was to repeat the experience of that Sabbath School teacher, and win the unsaved by personal appeal. *He was convinced now it could be done*, and he saw in it the secret of the world's conversion. He soon gave up business that he might devote his whole time and strength, his undivided heart and powers, to work for God. Hear the exultant cry of this hero of the faith, a man who, the commercial world says, might have been another Marshall Field and who, the military world says, might have been another Ulysses S. Grant; "Oh, the luxury of leading some one out of the darkness of this world into the glorious light and liberty of the Gospel!"

How much the Church of Christ owes to the personal work of its faithful Sunday School teachers in following in Andrew's footsteps and leading their own scholars to the Saviour, will never be fully known. Let it not be forgotten that Mr. Moody himself was so won. Think of all he has led to the Saviour and all that they in turn have won, and then try to estimate the value to Christendom of the

efforts of the humble teacher who by a little personal work led the young boy to the Saviour! The teacher's name was Kimball, Edward Kimball. Moody was clerking in a shoe store in Boston and attending Sabbath School in the Mount Vernon Congregational Church. For weeks the teacher led the young clerk to a fuller knowledge of God's plan of salvation, but, realizing that this in itself would never save him, determined to have a personal interview. In the hope that his experience may help others who feel they should do the same thing, it is given here in his own words, taken, with the incident which follows it, from the life of D. L. Moody by his son. "I determined," says Mr. Kimball, "to speak to him about Christ and about his soul, and started down to Holton's shoe store. When I was nearly there I began to wonder whether I ought to go in just then during business hours. I thought that possibly my call might embarrass the boy, and that when I went away the other clerks might ask who I was and taunt him with my efforts in trying to make him a good boy. In the meantime I had passed the store, and discovering this, I determined to make a dash for it and have it over at once. I found Moody in the back part of the building wrapping up shoes. I went up to him at once, and putting my hand on his shoulder, I made what I afterwards felt was a very weak plea for Christ. I don't know just what words I used, nor could Mr. Moody tell. I simply told him of

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Christ's love for him and the love Christ wanted in return. That was all there was. It seemed the young man was just ready for the light that then broke upon him, and there, in the back of that store in Boston, he gave himself and his life to Christ."

A most remarkable thing about this bit of personal work is that seventeen years later, when Mr. Moody was conducting a mission in Worcester, Mass., the young son of this same Edward Kimball tarried after one of the services and introduced himself.

"What!" said Mr. Moody, "are you the son of Mr. Edward Kimball, of Boston? What is your name?"

"Henry."

"I am glad to see you. Henry, are you a Christian?"

"No, sir, I do not think I am."

"How old are you?"

"I am seventeen."

"Henry, when I was just seventeen, and you were a little baby in the crib, your father came to me and put his hand on my shoulder and asked me to be a Christian, and he was the only man that ever came to me and talked to me because he loved my soul; and now I want you, my boy, to be a Christian. Henry, don't you want to be a Christian?"

"Yes, sir, I think I do," said the boy.

They sat down together, and Mr. Moody opened his Bible. The boy listened attentively to the words

that impressed him more and more, till at length they brought him to where their speaker had been himself led so long ago.

Oh, the power of the personal touch! There is nothing like it in all the world. Students may bring their classmates, men may bring their business associates, women may bring those of their little social circle, parents may bring their children. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman says if any influence led him to decide for Christ it was the sweet, consistent living of his mother.

Rev. Sam P. Jones gives the credit for his conversion to his father. His story is full of tragedy and heartache. His own mother died when he was nine years old. During the Civil War his father was away from home and the step-mother, though a worthy and faithful woman, was unable to restrain his youthful excesses. He contracted most of the habits of extravagant young manhood and at twenty-one "was physically and morally ruined." On his father's return from the war he straightened up somewhat and, studying law for a year, was admitted to the bar. Shortly after this he married. Although his law practice opened auspiciously, with every promise of large future success, he soon began to drink again and the bright prospect vanished. His poor wife suffered all the tortures known to wives of drinking husbands. In spite of all entreaty, Jones went on in his life of dissipation until in August,

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1872, his father lay on his death bed. Parental anxiety welled large in his heart as he bade his dissolute son good-by. He determined to make one more effort to win him to the Saviour, and his life seemed to be prolonged while he did so. At length, when the life-tide ebbed low, the contrite son promised the dying father that he would accept the Saviour, live the remainder of his days on earth a Christian, and meet him in heaven. "No man," says the evangelist, "could feel what I felt or see what I saw in that death chamber, as father almost literally shouted his way out of this world, without crying out from the depths of his heart:

"I yield, I yield!
I can hold out no more;
I sink, by dying love compelled
And own Thee Conqueror."*

Christian parent, Christian neighbor, Christian student, Christian business man, Christian minister, what others have done you can do. Human influence continues a dominant factor in society. It cannot be withstood. The moment we become Andrews in our eagerness to bring, our friends will become Peters in their willingness to come. *Personal work is the keynote to progress in the world's redemption.* Write that on the tablets of your heart and respond

*See "What Led Me to Christ," edited by C. H. Gootie.

Peter

daily to its promptings. Then, and hardly till then, will we have a right to pray: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

XV.

CORNELIUS; WHILE LISTENING TO A SERMON.

IT is permitted men to occasionally speak, with due humility, of the work in which they themselves are engaged. It is permissible also for a man to set up ideals which he himself is only striving after and which he has small hopes of ever completely attaining. I am taking advantage of that permission when I speak here of the proclamation of Divine Truth.

Comparatively few ministers seem to be yet conscious of the fact that the most powerful organ in their hands to use for the conversion of men is the sermon. More hearts are touched by a plain, gripping statement of the truth than by all other forces put together. It must be considered sooner or later if the life is to be any force in the religious world, or is even to remain true. An aroused conscience and a penitent heart may carry a life into the Church, but there will be small growth and no progress until he considers the great fundamental truths of Christianity, fights his battles of doubt and uncertainty and reaches conclusions that all the turmoil in the world cannot shake. Emotions pass;

truth abides. Conscience quiets down; an aroused heart increasingly lives. A settled belief is the hidden anchor that holds the life-ship safe on the troubled sea of human existence.

Opinion is by no means uniform on the value of the sermon in religious work. In some of our largest and most powerful churches it is relegated to a subordinate place. Ritual and informal instruction take its place. One wonders how the custom ever grew up, since there is not the slightest New Testament warrant for it. Christ sent His Apostles forth to *preach*: He Himself went about "preaching and teaching in their synagogues," and Paul commanded Timothy to "preach the Word: do the work of an evangelist."

It is openly conceded that the eras of progress in the Church have been the eras when great preachers appeared. Savonarola first gripped the people of Florence by his powerful sermons in St. Mark's and the Duomo. John Knox stirred all Scotland by his sermons. The Wesleys and Whitefield were great preachers. Jonathan Edwards and the Tennants stirred America by their powerful preaching of the old Gospel. When a human life takes the Truth of God into itself; grasps its mighty significance and bearing and, out of an unselfish desire to have all men profit by that Truth, gives it out in formal utterance from a Christian pulpit, it must have a mighty effect.

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The second most powerful thing to the personality of God is the personality of a Spirit-filled man. All other forces, however good in themselves, must be forever secondary. An earnest, honest man, whose warm, unselfish heart is throbbing with the love of God for all men, who is sure he knows the way by which wandering men can get back to their Father, have the stains of sin washed away, and life restored to its highest possible estate; when such a man rises to preach there are always men who hear him gladly and always some who believe his story and begin to follow it.

A Seeker Who Found His Lord.

In the study before us we have the incident of the first man from the Gentile world who found the Saviour through listening to an earnestly preached sermon.

Somewhere between the years A. D. 30 and 40, during the days of Roman domination over the Holy Land, there was sent from Rome to Cæsarea, the political capital of Palestine, a scion of the ancient and honorable family of the Cornelii. He came as a military officer, being captain of the Italian band, and was from all accounts a most remarkable man for his age and occupation, and one whose life, in connection with its contact with Christianity, will richly repay careful study. His

Cornelius

history is contained in a single chapter of the Sacred Book called "The Acts of Apostles," while with characteristic brevity his leading qualities are quite fully given in twenty-four small words.

In this amazingly brief biography of a truly great man, Luke the sacred historian, begins very logically with the quality which is a fertile garden for all Christian virtues: "*He was a devout man.*" A man steady and sincere in his life, earnest and thoughtful, though by no means a hermit or an ascetic; a man who had pleasure in his life, but who took pleasure in the best things, in the highest and most approved ways. A man whose working motto was the Golden Rule; not grasping and avaricious, but whose policy was to let others live while he lived and to do something daily to gladden and brighten lives less fortunate than his own. In a word he was a positive, affirmative and always-to-be-relied-upon factor in the vicinity in which he lived, a help to every man whose life touched his.

You have known such men as Cornelius. They are not so rare as we sometimes fear. Every community has its quota, and the truer our own life is, the more of them we find. We make one of our greatest mistakes to-day in roundly condemning many a truly worthy man because of some trifling characteristic of which we may not approve, regardless of a noble spirit that earnestly strives to save.

It is right enough to ask of good men that so far

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as possible they avoid acquiring habits of life that are repulsive, but it is quite as reasonable to ask of observers that they see the mountain of a good man's service rather than the mole-hill of his objectionable eccentricities.

The strength of Cornelius' character is truly Herculean when considered as existing in the early half of the first century. Outside the families of Israel there were few heavenly-minded men, and those who were so, at least the great majority of them, were devout only so far as their own souls were concerned. The spirit of brotherhood, now giving birth to so much missionary activity, to so much effort on behalf of the sick and the afflicted, to the founding of so many schools and colleges for the education and equipment of those in limited circumstances, had not taken possession of many lives. But Cornelius, the Roman centurion, a man in whom we hardly expect to find it, had caught its spirit, and so fully and perfectly that he not only desired his servants and soldiers to share his religious life with him, but so embellished its principles by his spotless and splendid life that they *desired to be as he was, to worship as he worshipped*.

O lofty and rare accomplishment! How quickly would the religious problem of the world be solved if all Christians would so adorn the doctrines of their religion, that "all their household," both servants in the kitchen and servants in the field, ser-

Cornelius

vants in the office and servants in the store, not only took notice of it as they were invited to share their devotions, but who were so moved by their sincerity and strength, so convinced that their profession was true, so drawn to them and to their religion by reason of their spotless characters and their faithful performance of all duties arising from their profession, that they were not only drawn to them, but were led to adopt their religion as their own, in the hope and belief that what it had done for their employers it would surely do for them. And yet, this is the height to which we, as Christians, should every one attain.

“Cornelius was a devout man,” says his biographer, “one that feared God *with all his house.*” The religion of Cornelius, however, added to its spirit of devotion a very practical turn. It not only had great faith in God, but it showed its faith by its works; “*he gave much alms to the people.*” The missionary work of the first half of the initial century of the Christian era had not progressed far beyond the home field. Peter was at work and Paul was visiting the Churches adjacent to Antioch in Syria and had taken one offering from the Gentiles, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, but for the most part the work of this nature of which the Roman world could boast was done face to face. The amount of such work was not large, but the generous heart of Cornelius could not see want unrelieved, and he gave

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much of his substance that suffering might be stopped, that hunger might be appeased.

Saying nothing of the worthiness of those upon whom he bestowed his munificence, the effect upon Cornelius was glorious, enlarging his sympathy, softening and enriching his heart, widening his knowledge of human nature, deepening and strengthening his character. He found out as fully as any man that ever lived the full significance of the Saviour's words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The five words concluding the terse setting forth of the virtues of Cornelius would be considered by most men a fitting capstone to a devout and worthy life: "*He prayed to God alway.*" "What shall we add," says one earnest questioner, "to a life so reverent, so trustful, so confident that God hears and cares for his children, that it is in a continual attitude of prayer before Him? And, indeed, Cornelius had gone as far as *he* could. The sacred biographer brings no charges of shortcoming against his noble subject. He had been an earnest seeker after religious truth, and as he found it, it became a part of his life principle, and he was controlled by it. One asks the question with some show of reason, "For what would such a man as Cornelius pray?" We must go to the answer given almost immediately to know the content and burden of this earnest seeker's prayer. He wanted more and clearer light; he wanted assurance of forgiveness of sin; he wanted

Cornelius

the fulness and freedom of holy living, which no alms, no good deeds alone, can work within us; he wanted many doubts and difficulties solved; he wanted to be closer to God, with a consciousness of His love, and presence and care; he wanted to know more about the life to come." (Peloubet, "Notes," 1897.)

Can you conceive of any soil more promising into which to sow new religious truth? If the unsaved men and women of any city were anxious enough about the future, about their own relation to their Creator, about His purpose in them and in the world, to go *in the light they have* to His throne in fervent prayer, they need no longer remain in doubt or uncertainty. No prayer for light has long remained unanswered.

In the case of this noble Centurion a most remarkable answer was given to his earnest life and his prayer of faith. He himself told Peter what it was when he had reached his home in Cæsarea, after a hasty trip from Joppa, "Four days ago I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house, and behold a man stood before me, in bright apparel, and said, 'Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send, therefore, to Joppa, and call unto thee Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he lodgeth in the house of Simon, a tanner by the seaside.' "

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The Sermon that Broke the Jewish Wall.

And Peter opened his mouth and said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." Continuing his wonderful sermon, this fervent messenger, himself a recent convert to the larger plans of God, preached the Gospel of Jesus to the waiting and anxious Cornelian household. He preached to them "Jesus Christ, the divine Saviour from heaven; His appointment by God, and enduement with the Holy Spirit; His life, devoted to good works and words, expressive of His character, and of the Father who sent Him; His victory over the powers of evil; His atoning death on the cross; His resurrection abundantly proved by chosen witnesses, who saw him, not far away as in a vision, but who ate and drank with him, touched him, and knew He was the same Jesus who died. The one duty and privilege to believe on Him, as the necessary condition of salvation, the means by which men are made holy and fitted for heaven." (Peloubet, "Notes," 1897.)

These truths, so earnestly preached by the great Apostle, fell upon the ready heart of Cornelius and his household like a benediction. They could not withstand them. With all doubts dissolved, with the way made plain, with duty outlined, they yielded to the Gospel appeal, accepted the cleansing and

Cornelius

sealing ordinance of baptism, and were at once enrolled as members of the young Church that was to do so much for the world.

There is then in this Christ-age something to be added to the most perfect life that is built upon a purely human foundation; something that gives it form and substance, power and continuance; something which satisfies the longing of the human heart and makes it rest content, confident that it is a factor in a great plan of God. It is the religion of Jesus Christ, without which there is no remission of sins.

How high have you gone, O man of earthly origin, in your struggles toward a perfect life? The story of Cornelius teaches us assuredly this lesson: However high we may have gone by our own power, however devout and almsgiving and praying we may have become, there is something else, higher than all these lofty things, more significant, more vital as regards eternity and the will of God. It is the full, the ready, the open acceptance of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of the world.

Glorious capstone of a beautiful building and yet, if necessary, such is the providence of God, it may be and most often is also foundation on which the perfect structure is builded; an inexhaustible mine from which all desirable jewels are freely gathered.

It was Paul, *the preacher*, who said: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

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(Romans, 1: 16.) Are *you* ashamed to preach the Gospel of Christ?

“Jesus, and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of Thee?
Ashamed of Thee whom angels praise,
Whose glory shines through endless days.”

If you are ashamed of it, ashamed of its simplicity or homely ways, ashamed of its open rebuke of sin, or its call to open righteousness, then your place is not in the Christian ministry. But if you appreciate its power to save the most sin-burdened lives, if you believe it to be the only power of God unto salvation; if it commends itself to you as the solver of society's evils, and the one arm that can lift a wandering race back to God, then *preach it* with all the power of your fully consecrated life; turn not to the most fascinating subjects in literature, science or philosophy, but taking the precious words from the lips of the Master, *preach them* so long as God gives you breath!

XVI.

LYDIA; WHILE ATTENDING A PRAYER-MEETING.

THE coming of woman into Christianity has been the greatest human factor in its progress. With her inherent innocence and purity, her warm and responsive heart, her larger faith, she has clung to Christ's religion through evil report and through good and, as mother and neighbor and friend, has ever been busy persuading others to adopt it. True it has done more for her than, with all her devotion, she can ever do for it. To be lifted out of obscurity and semi-bondage, to be given a place by man's side instead of beneath his feet, to be made an entity apart from her relationship with man, and to be assured of an individual standing with God; who can measure or repay such benefits?

The wonder, to one who knows the facts, is not to see women within the Church, but to see any without. They are not by nature ungrateful. It is the disposition of woman to more than repay any benefits received. Surely the women who refuse to give their lives and choicest service to Christ and His Church must be ignorant of what He has done for them. Its significance has never laid hold on their

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hearts. If all could take a journey through non-Christian countries; see child-marriage and widowhood in all their heathen horrors, see women as beasts of burden, supported for their fertility alone and valued only for their power to work and to bear sons; see them ignored in public worship and granted a soul only as they are related to some man; they would surely come home to give their lives to making strong the Church and spreading abroad the Gospel.

Those who have embraced Christianity have done so, in the main, with whole hearts and have begun at once to work for others. Rarely indeed does a woman come into the Kingdom alone. She has many ties binding her to children, to relatives, to friends, and to these she talks much of her joy and satisfaction in the Christian life. She does not hesitate to talk of the tenderer, more sacred things of life. They are meat and drink to her. She longs to throw around the lives of those she loves the strong arms of the Christian faith; the helpful, restraining influences of the Saviour. And so it is a common thing for women to come to the pastor with children or friends, encouraging them while they knock for entrance at the doors of the Church. Without this aid and solicitude on the part of woman the Church would never have attained one-half the strength she glories in to-day.

Europe's First Convert a Woman.

In this chapter we are to study the conversion of the spiritual progenitor of all the Christians of Europe and America, Lydia, a woman of Thyatira, a seller of purple vests. At the time of her conversion this unusual woman was in business in Philippi, had a home there and was undoubtedly prospering. Paul and Silas, on the second great missionary journey, had been moved, by special call, to go over into Macedonia. Philippi can hardly be said to have welcomed them with outstretched arms. The few Jews had no synagogue, but every Sabbath they held a prayer-meeting outside the city, on the river bank, and on this prayer-meeting, Lydia, a proselyte "who worshipped God" was wont to attend.

It was most natural that Paul and Silas, hearing about this weekly prayer-meeting, should be moved to attend it. To them prayer was the Christian's daily bread. They knew that only in prayer could they lay hold on God; that only in prayer could they feel such relation with Him as would help them in their work for men. They did not underestimate the value of work, as is everywhere evident in their history, but neither did they underestimate prayer, the Christian's vital breath. Within a few hours from some one of these public meetings they were praying and praising God from the inner recesses of a loathsome Philippian prison. Fortunate or unfortunate,

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sick or well, they must pray, and thereby link themselves anew with God.

One can well believe it was not the river on whose banks they met that kept that prayer-meeting from being dry! All the vitality of the great missionary's life would be thrown into it. In his fervid appeals he would seem to carry the whole needy world up to the throne of God. All hearts were touched, and Lydia's so profoundly as to move her to an open acceptance of the Saviour and the dedication of all that she had to His service. *Lydia found the Saviour in a prayer-meeting.* The service is still common in the Church, but in most communities has lost its power. Can that power be recovered? This and other kindred subjects may well occupy our minds as we pursue the story.

Christianity Calls to Prayer.

The Christian religion being so largely spiritual, and spiritual experience being so essential to growth and development therein, it would be natural to suppose that the prayer-meeting would be the most largely attended and the most highly esteemed of all the services of the Church. Here the people would throng; here they would take most fervent part; from this service they would the most reluctantly depart. To point out that this is not so is to call attention to the element of greatest weakness in our work of Christian culture.

A certain measure of formality can hardly be avoided, if it were desired, in the services of the Sabbath day; it seems to be entirely in keeping with the spirit of awe and reverence that is at the heart of all true worship. The service must be largely in the hands of the minister who will take advantage of the presence of many people and their freedom from week-day duties to declare the Evangel and to expound the Scriptures. The freedom of an informal week-day service is impossible. Even if it were, it is a long time from Sabbath to Sabbath for hearts that truly love the Lord. There is surely a loud call for a service of a different nature somewhere between Sabbaths, and by common consent the prayer-meeting should be that service.

It is with keen regret one notes the neglect that has been shown this midweek opportunity by the masses of our Christian people. Victims of an Indian famine have never yet neglected the opportunity to take food when it came to them, but souls leaner than their emaciated bodies will pass by the door of a prayer-meeting to attend the theatre or a motion picture show. Let us confess that the fault may not all be with the people. The minister usually determines the nature of the service and some very good men conduct prayer-meetings it would require an Amazon to moisten! Surely the plan of conducting a prayer-meeting, followed by our grandfathers of the tenth remove, is not so valuable that it must be

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retained while everything else they did has long since been abandoned. A Christian experience, for example, is valuable the first or second time it is heard, but when one has, as the leading prospect of a coming meeting, the hearing of the same experiences he has heard for a decade, he may be pardoned for not being feverishly anxious to attend. One rejoices also in the prayers of the saints, but one modern has, as a boyhood memory, a prayer made every week by a self-esteemed Church officer, of a very selfish and otherwise questionable nature, that was drawled in such a nasal twang, was so full of inappropriate words and wretched grammar, as to rob the prayer-meeting memory of half its sweetness. He does not remember one bright or attractive thing that ever occurred in the service. He went because his saintly mother said it was his duty to go.

No Sin to Make Prayer-Meeting Attractive.

Can any good reason be advanced why a mid-week prayer service should not be bright, interesting and attractive? Any reason why it should not partake of the modern spirit of light and life? Any reason why it should not provide the people with new ideas and plans instead of sending them home burdened with a sense of its insufferable dulness? We hear a good deal of pious cant among a certain type of ministers about not taking the prayer-meeting away from the people. The truth is that when

not more than two or three per cent. of a church's membership ever think of attending, *the people have gone away from the prayer-meeting*. They must be won back to it; the prayer-meeting must be made so attractive they will want to attend it.

Without in any way denying the people an opportunity to take part, the minister can so throw himself into the service as to make it bright, interesting and full of helpfulness. It is the profound conviction of many observers that the modern prayer-meeting is failing *because the minister slights it*. The pastor of a large but not over-active church, after a self-indulgent afternoon with old college friends, was heard to remark at half past five o'clock: "You really must excuse me now; this is prayer-meeting evening and I must have half an hour to prepare for it." No one was surprised when, at the meeting following, only a dozen or so of the saints were present; that the pastor said not one bright or helpful thing throughout the service; that when he saw the meeting was being a dismal failure, he got up and made a very flatulent, platitudinous exposition of a passage of Scripture of whose rich teachings he seemed entirely ignorant; or that at the end of the failure he lied, saying he had been so busy with pastoral duties during the week he had not had time to prepare. *So long as pastors take that attitude toward their prayer-meeting, it will be a failure and bear no fruit*. Worse than that, it is

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a hindrance, for when the unsaved of a community hear of such a prayer-meeting, they feel there is little or nothing in the Christianity which puts such a slight upon prayer.

The Prayer-Meeting Should Promote Fellowship.

The church does not exist that does not need more of the spirit of fellowship among its people. While his own spirit will do much, the minister can not promote this to any great extent at the preaching services. The prayer-meeting is his opportunity. It may well be called: The Mid-Week Social Service for Prayer and Bible Study. The minister should give all his study time the day on which it is held to preparation. It is not particularly stimulating or encouraging to a people to see the leader frantically hunting for hymns, as we have seen some pastors do, after the service has begun, while they are singing one, or *while some member is praying*. The spirited singing of half a dozen Gospel hymns (at least half of these should have been written within the last one hundred years!) will often put the people in just the frame of mind the pastor needs to make a lasting impression with his message. Before the Scripture lesson and exposition let some sweet soprano voice sing a Gospel story. The accompanying instrument should be played by the best musician the congregation affords.

The music itself will do much to warm hearts and quicken brains, but five or ten minutes before the service closes the minister should announce that before the benediction *and as a part of the service* a few moments would be given to social intercourse. He should ask the people to rise and greet their nearest neighbors and then move freely about the room speaking to strangers and introducing them to other members. No person should ever be allowed to go from a prayer-meeting burdened with lonesomeness or with a feeling that the Church of Christ is cold and selfish. When the period is up, let the organ sound the key-note of a familiar hymn in which the people, pausing where they chance to be and still standing, will join, before the benediction. When this is pronounced, the social intercourse will continue and all will go home stimulated and happy. A stranger or new resident in the community dropping into such a prayer-meeting will feel acquainted from that time on. He will feel that the people of the church are warm-hearted, and, it is worthy of note, there will always be enough people at such a service to take the chill off, and make the visitor know the church is alive. This plan, mentioned in the chapter on The Spirit of Evangelism, is elaborated here and its adoption urged because of the large returns it has yielded in the writer's ministry.

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The Pastor's Address.

How much time a pastor should use in a prayer-meeting and what he should do during the time has long been a matter of dispute. This may be set down as vital: *Whatever he does should be the very best of which he is capable.* It is not a time for rambling, extemporaneous speech. The people need most of all the Bread of Life, and the minister may well take time to break it to them. The most helpful and fruit-bearing plan seems to be to take a short passage from the Gospel Story and, leaving the obvious things for the people's own quick minds, present some of the richness that has been found only by hard study. What new phases does the original language present? What helpful messages grow out of a consideration of the historical situation or connections? At what points does the passage under consideration impinge on modern life and its problems?

Sometimes it may be best to raise questions and leave them for the people to answer. If they are slow in starting, a few questions tactfully put to a safe man or woman may quicken things. Nothing ever interests people more than a frank and easy discussion of the problems of human life. How to meet the problems of childhood; how to be neighbor to those in need; how to draw comfort from the Scriptures in the hour of disappointment or sorrow. The

Lydia

very informality demanded in such a discussion draws hearts together, and, when one after another sees how honestly their neighbors are striving to live the Christ-life, animosities will be softened and petty quarrels will cease.

The Prayer-meeting Should Develop and Reveal Talent.

No minister knows of half the power lying latent in the lives of his people. They come and sit silent during the preaching of the Sunday sermons and no sign of power escapes them. And yet every one has power; the Church should be getting the benefit of it; the prayer-meeting offers the opportunity of drawing it out. Perhaps it is the social quality; the ability to meet strangers tactfully and make them feel at home; perhaps it is quick insight into situations or relations, such as most women possess. It will be most valuable when you are applying the Scripture lesson to modern life; possibly it is musical talent. Why should not the best be used for the glory of God in the prayer-meeting? Perhaps it is the power to draw other souls to the Master. You need this most of all in this informal service. A wise pastor will call out these powers from week to week, not only making them stronger, but giving the Kingdom the benefit of them.

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The Prayer-meeting a Soul-winning Service.

Most of all, as the spirit of evangelism grows in the Church, are men feeling that the mid-week service should yield many lives for the Master. It must be so conducted that our children and unsaved friends will love to attend it, and when they do, they should be led to understand His claims upon their lives and given an opportunity to respond to them. The doors of the Church of Jesus should be always open so that when some wandering child comes home he may find no obstacle in the way of his walking straight into his Father's arms.

Most pastors are quite amazed when they hear one talk of the prayer-meeting as a place for soul-saving. *There are never any unsaved people in their prayer-meetings!* Well, why? One says: "Prayer-meetings are for the building up of the saints." So they are, but is the company of the saints so disagreeable that no unsaved friends will ever attend with them? The heart of the matter is, most prayer-meetings are so unattractive to the unsaved, and to the saved for the matter of that, that they rarely attend them.

The meetings conducted by our great city Missions and the Salvation Army, night after night, throughout the year, are in reality prayer-meetings, but they have so much of human interest in them and bear so hard upon the problems men and women are com-

pelled every day to face, that thousands attend them who are not yet saved, but who are certain to be before many weeks pass. No man can long hear the Gospel story persuasively told and not yield to it. "I," said the Saviour, "*if I be lifted up*, will draw all men unto me."

A Modern Prayer-meeting Conversion.

It was in a prayer-meeting in Jerry MacAuley Mission in New York that the Hadley boys, S. H. and H. H., two of the most persistent soul-winners America has ever seen, found the Saviour. The story of the latter's experience is heart-gripping and heart-cheering, for it shows what can be achieved. It has been told by Mr. Hadley himself all over the country, but it will bear a thousand repetitions. He was well born and raised in a quiet country home in Ohio, but contracted the habit of drink while in the army. The habit fastened its awful fangs into him, and he could not shake it off. He went into business and failed because of drink. He started to practice law, but failed on account of drink. He started a newspaper in New York, but was failing here also on account of drink. Life was becoming unendurable. He had married a patient and devoted wife, and now had six beautiful children, but he was disgracing them all and breaking their hearts. One night he decided he would end it all by plunging into East River.

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Something held him back till he should see his brother again, who had been converted and was then conducting Water Street Mission. Without any thought of personal release he entered the Mission and sat down to wait till the meeting should be over, and he could have a last talk with his brother. As the service progressed, his heart was stirred. The songs cheered him; the prayers seemed to take hold on God. Finally the testimonies began. One after another told how the Lord had saved him. A Scotch printer arose and, pointing with pride to his well-dressed wife and child, told how he had abused and neglected them till they were compelled to leave him, but since the Lord had saved him from the curse of liquor they had come back and now theirs was the happiest of homes.

"All at once," says Mr. Hadley, "it occurred to me that possibly I might be saved, too, if I were to stop trying to do it all myself, and follow Jesus and trust Him. And I determined right then to test His power and love." He stood up and told the condition he was in, then, going forward, he fell down on his knees and prayed to God for mercy and forgiveness. Gradually the sense of forgiveness and cleansing came over him. He clung to God as a drowning child would to his earthly father. He went out of the meeting a saved man, and from that day forward was free from the awful craving for liquor that for half a life-time had mastered him. With a zeal rarely

witnessed, he gave the remainder of his life to saving others, and it was in prayer-meetings most of his work was done.

Let the precious opportunity of the mid-week service be rescued from its present place, next the grave. European Christianity started in a prayer-meeting, and it may be vastly furthered by laying the emphasis on such meetings to-day. Their possibilities are infinite, limited only by the willingness of pastor and people to throw themselves into them. Rightly conducted they may become the Church's chief source of power and the recruiting ground for countless new members.

XVII.

SAUL OF TARSUS; BY THE DIRECT INTERVENTION OF DIVINE POWER.

THE forces that lead human hearts to the Saviour are found to be almost as numerous as men. Rarely are two lives effected by exactly the same power or combination of circumstances. Here it is a mother's prayers; there a father's admonitions and appeals. In one case it is a letter from a distant friend; in another the quiet, persistent invitations of a companion. In some cases man seems the larger factor; in others the "still small voice" that will not cease its appeals. The Spirit seems to say, as St. Paul himself did, in the early days: "All things to all men if by all means I may save some."

The most gratifying of all facts that confront the student is that in response to *some* force men are coming to the Saviour every day; that no sun sets without having shone upon the conversion of many of God's children. *The race is being saved.* Not so rapidly as we could wish, but as rapidly as men can be brought into contact with Jesus; as rapidly as they will yield their hearts to Him. If you are not in the company it is your fault, not God's. He does

Saul of Tarsus

not wish any to perish, but will have all men to be saved.

The Master Christian Converted.

In the study before us we are to consider the conversion of the master Christian of the ages, the man whose coming into the Kingdom has meant more to its progress than the coming of any other; the Jew born with the rights of Roman citizenship, Saul of Tarsus. That we may spend the more time on his later life, his early years will be passed by. On the threshold of his young manhood he found himself a leader. His education had been the best his day afforded. To sit at the feet of Gamaliel was to put the crown on the highest education; it was like a post graduate course at Yale or Princeton. Added to this the young student was religiously a Pharisee. This left nothing to be said regarding his admiration of the Mosaic law or his allegiance to it. As he himself said of the Athenians at a later day, he was "more than others respectful of things divine." There are evidences that he was a member of the Sanhedrin, the central governing body of the Jewish nation.

Thus it will be seen that Saul was on the threshold of a great career, whether in the Church or in the Roman state. Providence had decreed him a leader; it only required a few years of experience to give him the power and presence such leadership demands. It can be easily imagined that the young

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leader's friends would say to each other: "The one thing that threatens the career of Saul is his unreasonable and curbless hatred of the new sect called Christians. Such violence has spoiled many a promising career before, and he may not hope to escape its ravages. Hatred grows by what it feeds upon. It might lead him to murder and unpardonable crime."

It was at about this time that the young Pharisee had an experience that sobered him. The young Church of the Christians had grown so fast new officers were necessary. Among those appointed was Stephen, a man full of faith and good works, who strove so mightily for God as to arouse the jealousy of the narrower Jews, and who was so powerful in argument for the claims of Jesus as to leave them no foot to stand on. He must be gotten out of the way, and the simplest course, in view of his impassioned zeal for the Messiahship of Jesus, was to charge him with blasphemy and, whether proved or not, stone him to death without the city wall. The farcical trial was hurried through and the devout Stephen dragged to the place of martyrdom. That a bloody and groundless murder was about to be committed no one familiar with the facts could dispute. No matter, let it go on. These up-start Christians must be checked. That they might be the more free to perform their nefarious work the murderers drew off their loose outer garments and

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threw them over the arm of Saul, the young student from Tarsus. He was watching the procedure with more than usual interest. His hatred of all Christians made him a willing witness of Stephen's slaughter, but something held him back from casting a stone at him. One cannot escape the conviction that when the martyr's face shone with the glory of heaven's own light, and the victory of dying for his Lord wrote itself on every feature, that such a student of human nature as Saul was would be moved. For the moment his hatred would be checked and admiration for the heroic Christian would take its place. Did Saul get his first glimpse of the Saviour here?

If he did he seems to have done his utmost to throw off its effects. A man under deep conviction will oftentimes plunge deeper than ever into sin. Saul set himself to exterminate the Christians. Going boldly to the high priest, he obtained authority to seize, bind, scourge and imprison any of them he found, whether on the streets or in their own homes. Like an instrument of death he went from house to house, hailing innocent women and children and casting them into loathsome dungeons. Jerusalem did not satisfy him. He must go through other cities likewise until no vestige of the hated sect should be left alive.

One stands amazed at times at the evil God permits in the world, at the lengths He will allow evil

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men to go before lifting His hand to stop them. Was He giving Saul an opportunity to see the error of his way that he might turn back of his own accord? Was He waiting until the enormity of his offence would make his redemption all the more impressive? Truly His ways are past finding out.

But the time had come. This monster persecutor must be turned into the master Christian. Nothing but the power of Christ himself would be sufficient. And so, at a moment no man suspected, when Saul was cursing Him and vowing double vengeance on all who followed Him, Christ struck the blasphemer to the ground and changed his heart. Here is the most astounding event since the tragedy on Calvary. If Jesus there passed from life unto death, here Saul passed from death unto life. The man who rose to his feet was the same man, as to his physical being, who a moment ago fell under the blinding light, but all else was changed. A new soul, a new heart, a new attitude toward the Nazarene and toward all mankind. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Before, a persecutor; now a protector. Before, a reviler; now a devout proclaimer. Before, determined to stamp out the new sect; now determined to plant it in every city that all men might benefit by its mighty power.

The Effectual Work of God.

The first thought that detaches itself from the

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surging mass that arises in contemplation of this world-significant event is that God did it. No human element had any part in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. The event silenced forever the *ex machina* theory of deity. He does at times, if not at all times, put His hand upon the affairs of men and turn them to suit His measureless purposes. No man is beyond His power, no man is so far away from Him that he cannot be brought back in an instant of time, no man is so deep down in sin that he cannot be transformed and changed in the twinkling of an eye. Do not lose sight of this fact, O doubting men of the world. The world has not got beyond the control of its Maker, the children of men beyond the reach of the God who made us all. Some day He may speak to you as unto Elijah in the hour of despair: "What doest thou here? Arise, go and anoint kings and appoint successors that My work may not cease." It may be as unto Abraham: "Get thee out of thy country and from among thy kindred and I will make of thee a great nation."

You who silence the inner voice and crush down conscience and refuse to listen when voices cry in language the soul understands, you may be turning a deaf ear to God who is speaking to you after His custom in our day as surely as He spake to Abraham and Elijah and Saul. If the Second Person of the sacred Trinity spoke to Saul, the Third may be speaking to you this moment, as these words enter

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your consciousness: "My child, my child, why do you persecute me? Why refuse the life I offer? Why dwell in darkness and misery when you might be dwelling in the light of my love, with a sense of forgiveness and pardon flooding your soul?"

Your call to conversion may never be stronger or louder than this. If you refuse to respond now, it may never sound in your ear again. It is not God's general plan to break down the will of men. He leaves them free to make their own choice, but just as a mother leaves her beloved son free to make his own choice of a life work, while all the time she prays and pleads with God to lead him into the ministry, so God leaves you free to choose your own course in life, but longs toward you with greater love than that of a mother, hoping daily that you will turn his way.

Once Begun, God's Work is Always Completed.

A second striking thing about the conversion of Saul is the completeness of it. God does not begin a work and then abandon it when half done. With Him to begin is to complete, and He has never yet been apprehended in a poor piece of work. The change in Saul was absolute. There is no slipping back into old habits or language, as in the case of Peter; no longing for old luxuries as in the case of Israel. If ever a man was born again by the power of the Holy Spirit, Saul was. Hate was

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taken from his heart; the tenderest and most considerate love took its place. His proud pharisaism departed in an instant, never to return. What agony of soul he must have endured for his part in the murder of the innocent Stephen! What remorse for giving his vote against devout followers of Jesus when they were being falsely tried by the Sanhedrin! These wrongs of his former life may have been a factor in his determination to spend the remainder of his life and all his powers in building up Christianity and relieving the distress of Christians.

The completeness of Saul's conversion is not without parallels in modern days. H. H. Hadley says that at the moment of his conversion in the old Water Street Mission in New York, God not only took the love of sin out of his heart, but he took the taste for liquor out of his mouth, so that he could never again bring himself to taste a drop of it. He caused him to turn with loathing from his former haunts and associations and made him love the pure, the clean, the innocent.

The Glory of the Second Birth.

In his heart-gripping book, "Twice-Born Men," Mr. Harold Begbie tells us of a hardened criminal whom he calls Joe. Joe was born in the slums of London and showed criminal instincts from infancy. At nine he was flogged and imprisoned for theft, and at fourteen was sentenced to fifteen months' im-

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prisonment for burglary. He was the terror of his neighborhood, watched constantly by the police. Out of the first thirty-four years of his life seventeen were spent in prison.

One of the early companions of this criminal, a prize-fighter, was suddenly converted one night in the Salvation Army barracks. He began at once to work for others and centred his efforts on Joe. But the criminal was hardened and would not listen. One evening the converted fighter took the unconverted criminal to his home. It was the first happy home he had ever entered. From that night on Joe prayed, but it was not a prayer for personal pardon. It was a prayer that God would send him a good woman for a wife.

Few women ever realize the influence they might have over men's lives if they would always live pure and innocent, true and unselfishly, as God intended they should. When the average man marries he looks upon his wife as little, if any, less than an angel. Such reverence for womankind has God planted in the masculine breast. If the woman shatter this ideal and live down to unforgivable levels, the man who hoped to be saved by her will conclude there is nothing good in the world and will fall to depths untouched before, and have small desire for recovery.

This criminal prayed God for a good woman to save him. He was soon in prison again, and every

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night for the months of his term he sent up the same fervent prayer. When released from imprisonment his old friend, the prize-fighter, was waiting for him. He urged him to go straight to the Salvation Army meeting, but the criminal refused. He went instead to a public house. Here he was quickly in trouble and went out to settle his quarrel with fists. It was an awful fight. Joe nearly killed his opponent, but he himself had his head broken and his face cut and marred beyond recognition. He went straight from the fight to a surgeon, and had the wounds dressed; and straight from the surgeon, his head swathed in bandages, to the Salvation Army barracks. When the invitation to go forward was given he was the first to respond. Loving workers prayed for him and he prayed for himself, this time for pardon and peace. He remained at the bench for hours, but when he rose to his feet again he felt that he was a saved man.

Naturally everybody doubted the genuineness of his conversion. How could a life-long criminal be regenerated in a moment? Every watcher said he would probably fall again, and even his faithful friend, the prize-fighter, thought he should have another dip. *But he did not fall.* He testified that when God saved him that night, he took away his desire to steal and gave him strength to withstand the temptations that immediately crowded upon him. Before, he despised work and had never earned a

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dollar by honest toil. Now he took the humblest task and did it gladly, feeling that at last he had gotten started right in life. While, of course, he had not the education or the experience to undertake large Christian work, his conversion was as complete as St. Paul's. "Neither is His arm shortened that He cannot save." The God that completely regenerated Saul of Tarsus and Joe, the life-long criminal, of the London slums, can as completely regenerate any sinner of the twentieth century. Do not imagine your case is too hard. God loves hard tasks and never fails in them.

In an interesting foot-note the author of Joe's story tells us that the prayer of his prison days was soon answered. One day he was painting a buggy wheel and suddenly looking up through the spokes, he saw the smiling face of a young woman. He felt instantly that his prayer was at last answered. Cultivating the young woman's acquaintance, he told her his story and that he was sure God had sent her to him in answer to his prayer. He begged her to marry him. It had been a short time since his conversion and she was afraid, but said at last if he would join the Salvation Army, and come out openly into the Christian life, she would take the chance. Joe met the conditions at once, and they were soon married. He secured a good position. Children came into their home, and in all London none are happier or more grateful to God. The

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deep student is right: "One power and one alone can make the habitual criminal a good man in the loftiest and only lasting sense of that term, and that power is religion."

Will God Regenerate on Request?

Out of all this testimony there arises another question which bears directly upon the men of the twentieth century: Will God work as freely and as completely in regenerations that are asked for, as He does in those entered upon on His own initiative? The answer must be a positive and triumphant *Yes*. The witness of the ages may be our answer. Ninety-nine per cent. of the conversions in the lives of men come when men ask for them. If God has never regenerated you on His own initiative, you may rest assured He is eager to render you this infinite service. But it is not the plan of God to break down a man's will and force him into the Kingdom. He waits for men to decide for themselves that they want to come. If you are tired of sin; if the lees of life are bitter; if you long to be free from a guilty conscience and have a sense of duty performed to men and God, seek the Father's pardon; confess that you have sinned and pray to have those sins forgiven, and the stain of them washed away. God will not fail you and His work will be complete.

You need not wait for the intervention of some human factor; you may go straight to God your-

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self. He will listen to you as quickly as He will to any man for you. There is no favored class with Him; every man is on speaking terms with God. Go to Him frankly, make an honest confession of all past sins; ask to have them forgiven and forgotten. Tell Him you want to live right; that you want to quit sinning and live the white life; that you are going to make an honest effort, and you want His help. He will not fail you; all the goodness of God will flow out toward you and you will have your desire.

**A WORKING CHURCH AN EFFECTIVE
PROJECTILE.**

XVIII.

A WORKING CHURCH AN EFFECTIVE PROJECTILE.

IN our boyhood days, when we were preparing the old single-barrel muzzle-loading shotgun for deadly execution, everything, we were told, depended on the load and the way it was put in. The weapon had two leading characteristics: One was the recoil, better known to youngsters as the "kick," which, memory says, varied from the velocity and killing power of an angry mule's heels to those of exploding dynamite. The other was its disposition to scatter the shot so widely that a quail or rabbit of any agility could safely slip through the charge in half a dozen places with nothing worse than the loss of a few feathers or a trifling bunch of fur.

The skill of the hunter showed itself in loading the gun. There must be just so much powder; you could measure it to the grain in the hollow of your trembling hand. There must be just such a wad; no more and no less. These were to be driven home until so hard that the steel ramrod, striking the charge, would bound clear out of the barrel. Incomprehensible as it was, the way the powder was put in and "rammed down" had more to do with

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subsequent scattering or not scattering than the measure or the placing of the shot. The latter was secondary; a good round handful, with the wad just well down on the load and you were ready to adjust the cap.

Oh! the eagerness! If the game had been generous enough to sit quietly by, waiting its own obsequies, while this turmoil was going on, your hands shook with anxiety till you could hardly get the cap in place. All else was like a dream; rest the heavy weapon on the stake-and-rider fence nearby; pull the gun tight against your shoulder to minimize the damage to your own anatomy, point the muzzle somewhere in the direction of the game, *shut your eyes*, and FIRE!

If, for any reason, the agility of the game failed it at the critical moment, there it lay, when the smoke cleared away and you had recovered from the awful jolt of the recoil, waiting to be added to your hunting bag, already beginning to bulge as a result of your newly acquired skill in loading the gun.

As I look back from middle life at this youthful exploit, in connection with bringing this work to a close, I see a strange analogy. The Church too is a kind of weapon and unsaved men rightful quarry. The work a church does is the charge that wins or fails to win these men; and the way that work is done corresponds to the loading of the old shotgun. When the gun was well loaded and the shot brought

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down the game, there was ever an approving smile from father, and when the Church so does her work as to be *effectual*, when she builds character and wins large numbers to the Christ-life, she has upon her evermore the blessing of the Father of us all.

Efficiency the Modern Need.

Efficiency has come to be the master word in the business world. Nothing will take the place of it. Men may be handsome and well dressed, and suave and chivalrous, but if they do not get their work done before the sun sets, the active world has no place for them. No more stimulating word was ever uttered or one more worthy of constant repetition than that of William Allen White when he said in his excellent article on General Funston: "The world wants results; not good and sufficient reasons why results are not forthcoming."

Thousands of fine fellows are failing in the ministry because they let a good excuse for not doing a piece of work stand in the place of doing it. "I intended to make a strong sermon for Sunday, but so many calls for pastoral work came in I could not get to it." "I intended to call every day last week, but my wife's cousin came to visit us and I did not get out a single day." "I had made all arrangements to call on the sick last Tuesday afternoon, but a bad headache came on and I had to give it up." And so it goes, year after year, good excuses satis-

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fying men when the only thing that should satisfy them is getting their work done and gathering large and rich harvests to the Master's cause.

Efficiency must become the master word of the ministry and of the Church, as well as of the business world. *We need results worse than business enterprises do.* Every worthy man must relentlessly put to himself the questions: "Am I making good? Am I making full proof of my ministry? Am I fulfilling the desires and the plans of Christ for my life?" The men who die from over-work are not one in a thousand to those who die from over-resting, from over-eating, from over-sleeping, from over-yielding to every little hindrance that comes up to keep them from getting fruitful work done.

Work That Demands Admiration.

Gentlemen, we must disprove the charge that of all professions the ministry is the most inefficient. It is absolutely unpardonable that the charge should ever have been made. Every stroke of work we do honestly will contribute to our efficiency. If we read good books and have large experiences that we may prepare powerful sermons, we cannot escape the beneficial effects of reading the books and doing the work; if we extend sympathy and love and care to the afflicted and the needy, and do it unselfishly, that is, without seeking to be glorified and lauded

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for it, the results will show in stronger and richer character.

The vein of the world's pity for inefficient religious workers has pinched out. The man who sniffles and whines about his work being very hard and the people unresponsive, arouses only contempt. When the business world finds hard conditions it overcomes them and is stronger for the effort. The ministry will have to learn to do the same. Ask no man for pity. Do a class of work that will command every man's admiration and the world will gladly give you a place and a name.

Examples from Nature and Society.

As I write this word, high on the side of the Rocky Mountains, a tiny red ant is struggling past me with a load three times its size. I judge the load to be a bit of straw it is carrying to a home so distant that I cannot locate it. Other ants of the same family are all around, but the determined worker is not stopping to ask any of them for a lift. Stones and weeds block the way continually, yet I venture to say that if some sympathetic one should force help on this tiny hero there would be a fight. He does not want pity or help. He is straining every muscle to do this work alone. Perhaps there is a king or queen somewhere whose approval he craves. I can just see him now as he disappears over the crest ten feet away. He is working as though under a time

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limit. In the half hour I have been writing and watching, he has not stopped an instant to rest, nor loosened his hold on his heavy load. I cannot hold my pen back from writing here the scriptural injunction: "Go to the ant . . . consider her ways and be wise."

At the foot of the cliff on which I write nestles a busy city. In the railroad yards the switch engines are steaming here and there shunting cars on side-tracks and making up trains; in a new addition to the city a large force of men is at work cutting and filling new-laid streets. When rocks interfere they blast them out and use the fragments for filling the valleys; the campus of a great university is visible. On two new buildings swift workmen are making marvellous progress while the broad walk is thronged with students hurrying to library or classroom; on the streets of the city pedestrians and vehicles are hurrying this way and that, all bent on the accomplishment of some necessary task. The lesson from it all is: The great world is getting its work done and everybody is doing a lion's share.

Do Important Things in Private or in Public.

Unfortunately the very work of the ministry suggests seclusion. What a man does when he shuts the door of his study on a work day morning, only he and God know at the moment, but his people know the next Sunday, and his little world knows in a

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few months or years. Idleness or dawdling over magazines and novels is enormously expensive. Millionaires can hardly afford it, and yet many a minister who is whining about the low salary he is receiving does. Even in the ministry a man can coin time into money if he has the energy, and the government will not prosecute him for counterfeiting!

It is no longer enough to be simply working at something; we must be working at the thing that means most to our cause at the moment. Work for its own sake has a value, but work for the accomplishment of some definite purpose has an infinitely higher value. I once knew a man who spent three whole days painting some card-board signs to be used at the church picnic when a painter would have done the work for a quarter and have done it infinitely better. Yet that man was greatly offended when a bold member suggested that they would welcome a little better sermons and urged me to help him get a new field, for these heartless people were working him to death!

A man must choose even between tasks that are worthy. It will be impossible to do them all. Which ones are the most important? Which ones will contribute most to the great object you have taken vows to accomplish? Settle this in advance, early in the week or in the day, and then *get the work done*, no matter what arises to interfere.

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Only Focused Rays Burn.

To return to the figure of our title, we must make our church one solid force and send it irresistibly toward the mark it is our business to reach, the redemption of our communities, and, ultimately, of the whole world. Nothing less will satisfy the Master; nothing less should satisfy us. The scattering of modern Church work is the jest of the business world and ought to be the distress of every Christian worker. How can we turn all our streams into one channel? How can we focus all our rays until they burn?

It can never be done in the local church until the head is efficient and indomitable. Then it cannot be done until the people are willing to recognize this man's power and position and let him lead. Let him lay his plans large and fair; let him so manage the various parts of the church's work that they will converge toward his high purpose; let him prove the rightness and value of his plans by the abundant fruitage his perfect machine gathers; by the straightness with which his projectile goes to the eye of the target; by the regularity with which the quarry is taken. Success is the argument with which to silence complaint and opposition. "Try my plan for receiving Benevolent Offerings once," said a man sure of his methods to an objecting Church officer: "if it does not prove its value I will never urge it again."

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When the new plan brought in twice the money with half the effort of the old plans, the critic was silenced. Probably better plans for doing Church work than have yet been tried will soon be discovered, but until they are, work the plans we have that have proved themselves valuable and work them with an enthusiasm hitherto unknown.

To those who have had the patience to follow this work through, it is now clear that it is a loud call to the ministry and to the Church to gird loins anew and reënter the fight for the conquest of the world for God with a determination to win no power on earth can check. We have the greatest work in the world; its returns for time and eternity are immeasurable; it makes giants of the men and women who do it honestly and unselfishly and thus the world is doubly enriched; it compels the admiration of man; it wins the approval of God; it is the only work that will win a wandering race back to its Father. Gentlemen, with coats off, sleeves rolled high, muscles tense, let us do an honest life's work for God.

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